Agenda

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OXFORD CITY COUNCIL

Scrutiny Committee

Date:	**Tuesday 30 June 2015**
Time:	**6.15 pm**
Place:	**St Aldate's Room, Town Hall**

For any further information please contact:

Catherine Phythian, Committee Services Officer

Telephone: 01865 252402

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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
	Councillor Tom Hayes
	Councillor Mohammed Altaf-Khan
	Councillor Van Coulter
	Councillor Roy Darke
	Councillor James Fry
	Councillor Sam Hollick
	Councillor David Henwood
	Councillor Ben Lloyd-Shogbesan
	Councillor Linda Smith
	Councillor Sian Taylor
	Councillor Louise Upton
	Councillor Alex Hollingsworth
	Councillor Mike Rowley

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

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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 Finance Standing Panel is scheduled for 2 July 2015
The next Housing Standing Panel is scheduled for 7 September 2015

4 FUSION LIFESTYLE PERFORMANCE REPORT 2014/15 — 11 - 34

Contact Officer: Ian Brooke Tel 01865 252705, ibrooke@oxford.gov.uk

Background Information
The Scrutiny Committee has agreed to receive an annual report on Fusion Lifestyle's contract performance.
Why is it on the agenda?
For the Scrutiny Committee to scrutinise Fusion Lifestyle's annual performance report for 2014/15.
Who has been invited to comment?
Councillor Rowley, Ian Brooke and Wayne Hawkins (Divisional Business Manager for Fusion) will attend to present the report and answer the Committee's questions.

5 GRANT MONITORING INFORMATION FOR 2014/15 — 35 - 100

Contact Officer: Julia Tomkins, Communities & Neighbourhoods,
Tel: 01865 252685; e-mail: jtomkins@oxford.gov.uk

Background Information
The Scrutiny Committee has asked for this item to be included on the agenda for pre decision scrutiny.

Why is it on the agenda?
The City Executive Board will be asked to note the report on Grant Monitoring Information for 2014/15. This is an opportunity for the Scrutiny Committee to provide comments to the City Executive Board.
Who has been invited to comment?
Councillor Rowley and the Grants & External Funding Officer will attend to answer the Committee's questions.

6 STATEMENT OF COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT IN PLANNING 2015 101 - 190

Contact Officer: Lyndsey Beveridge, Planning and Regulatory,
Tel: 01865 252482; e-mail: lbeveridge@oxford.gov.uk

Background Information
The Scrutiny Committee has asked for this item to be included on the agenda for pre decision scrutiny. The Committee reviewed an earlier draft of this report at its meeting on 10 November 2014 and recommended to CEB that: "The Statement of Community Engagement clearly sets out how members of the public can access paper version of planning documents".
Why is it on the agenda?
The City Executive Board on 9 July 2015 will be asked to adopt the Statement of Community Involvement in Planning 2015. This is an opportunity for the Scrutiny Committee to provide comments to the City Executive Board.
Who has been invited to comment?
Councillor Hollingsworth and Lyndsey Beveridge will attend to answer the Committee's questions.

7 REPORT OF THE INEQUALITY PANEL 191 - 258

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

Background Information
The Scrutiny Committee in 2014/15 commissioned the Inequality Panel to undertake a time-limited review that would draw together a number of related topics that City Councillors wanted to explore.

The Committee agreed on 10 November 2014 that the main aims of the review would be to: 1. *Understand the scale, reasons and impact of inequality in Oxford.* 2. *Identify specific areas where the City Council can make the most difference in combatting inequality.* 3. *Make deliverable, evidence-based recommendations that are co-produced with local citizens or stakeholders where possible.*
Why is it on the agenda?
For the Scrutiny Committee to review and comment on the report of the Inequality Panel before it goes to CEB on 9 July 2015.
Who has been invited to comment?
Councillor Coulter, the Chair of the Inequality Panel, and Andrew Brown, Scrutiny Officer will present the report and answer questions.

8 WORK PROGRAMME AND FORWARD PLAN 259 - 266

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

Background Information
The Scrutiny Committee operates within a work programme which has been set for the 2015/16 council year. This programme will be reviewed at every meeting so that it can be adjusted to reflect the wishes of the Committee and take account of any changes to the latest Forward Plan (which outlines decisions to be taken by the City Executive Board or Council).
Why is it on the agenda?
The Scrutiny Committee is asked to set the priorities for its work programme for the 2015/16 council year. In particular the Committee is asked to consider: • Which suggested future scrutiny items / reviews should be a priority. • Whether any salient issues or topics are missing from the work programme. The Committee may wish to appoint lead members for priority reviews and ask for these to be scoped before the next meeting of the Scrutiny Committee. The Committee is asked to select which Forward Plan items they wish to pre-scrutinise 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.

9 APPOINTMENT OF CHAIR FOR THE HOUSING PANEL

The Housing Panel met on 4 June 2015 and was unable to elect a Chair. On advice from the Monitoring Officer, the decision to appoint a Chair has been referred to the Scrutiny Committee.

The following councillors have been nominated and may wish to briefly explain why they would like to chair the Housing Panel:

- Cllr Sam Hollick
- Cllr Linda Smith

10 REPORT BACK ON RECOMMENDATIONS

267 - 272

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, who are obliged to respond in writing.
Why is it on the agenda?
This item allows Committee to see the results of recommendations since the last meeting and the cumulative results of all scrutiny recommendations. Since the last meeting the following items have resulted in recommendations to the City Executive Board: • Report of the Local Economy Scrutiny Committee • Covered Market Leasing Strategy • Housing Asset Management Strategy (Housing Panel) • Review of the HMO Licencing Scheme (Housing Panel) The city centre PSPO report has been deferred to a future CEB meeting.
Who has been invited to comment?
Andrew Brown, Scrutiny Officer will present the report.

11 MINUTES

273 - 280

Minutes from 2 June 2015

Recommendation: That the minutes of the meeting held on 2 June 2015 be APPROVED as a true and accurate record.

12 DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS

Meetings are scheduled as followed:

6 October 2014
10 November 2014
8 December 2014
19 January 2015
3 February 2015

All meetings being at 6.15 pm.

DECLARING INTERESTS

General duty

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

What is a disclosable pecuniary interest?

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

Declaring an interest

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

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

Members’ Code of Conduct and public perception

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

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

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OXFORD CITY COUNCIL

To: Scrutiny Committee

Date: 30 June 2015

Report of: Head of Community Services

Title of Report: A report on the performance of the Council's leisure management contract with Fusion Lifestyle, covering the period from April 2014 to March 2015**.**

Summary

Purpose of report:To provide a performance update of the city's leisure management contract with Fusion Lifestyle, April 2014 to March 2015.

Key decision: Yes

Executive lead member: Councillor Mike Rowley,

Report author: Head of Community Services

Policy Framework:

- Strong, Active Communities
- Efficient, Effective Council

Appendix One - Leisure Centre Capital Investment
Appendix Two - Leisure Centre Subsidy per visit by Facility, 2014/15
Appendix Three- Leisure Centre visits 2008 to 2015
Appendix Four - Leisure Centre visits 2014 to 2015
Appendix Five - Leisure Centre Target group visits 2009 to 2015
Appendix Six – Sports and Community Development Outreach picturesAppendix Seven (a) - Carbon measurements 2013 to 2015 – Including facilities closed in December 2014.
Appendix Seven (b) - Carbon measurements 2013 to 2015 – with Leys Pools and Leisure Centre open, December 2014.
Appendix Eight - Leys Pools and Leisure Centre Sports Hall Lighting

Background

1.1 In March 2009 the council entered into a contract with Fusion Lifestyle (Fusion), a social enterprise with charitable status, to manage the Council's Leisure Facilities. The initial contract was for ten years, with a five year extension clause.

1.2 The contract has greatly improved the userexperience, alongside achieving cumulative revenue savings of around £1,360,000 per year.

1.3 Over this period, facilities have been greatly improved with around £14.4 million of capital investment, which has in the main been funded by the contract savings. (Appendix One - Leisure Centre Capital Investment)

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

1.5 The cost of the core leisure management contract to the council is fixed according to an agreed payment schedule for the period of the contract. The fee has reducedfollowing investment in improved quality facilities, and is based on charging a market rate for those who can afford it,whilst offering concessions to those on low incomes.

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

1.7 In 2014/15 The Leisure Management Contract incorporated the service delivery of the Council's seven leisure facilities;

- Barton Leisure Centre
- Leys Pools and Leisure Centre
- Blackbird Leys Swimming Pool (Closed December 2014)
- Ferry Leisure Centre
- Hinksey Outdoor Pool
- Oxford Ice Rink
- Temple Cowley Pools (Closed December 2014).

1.8 The final action of the Leisure Facilities Strategy 2009 was completed in December 2014; Temple Cowley Pools and Blackbird Leys Pool were closed and replaced by the new Leys Pools and Leisure Centre.

1.9 This report sets out performance of the leisure facilities managed on behalf of the Council by Fusion April 2014 to March 2015, and where

comparison data is available performance against previous year's delivery.

1.10 The committee have asked for a significant volume of information within this report and as such as lot of officer time has been spent on collating the data. It is proposed that a dashboard report is used to update on the contract going forward.

Value for money

2.1 The annual number of visits, management fee and contract utilities costs for March 2009 onwards has been used to demonstrate the overall subsidy per visit. This is an industry based calculation and allows us to consistently performance benchmark delivery of leisure management.

2.2 The pre transfer subsidy for leisure centres was £2.33 per visit. The subsidy per visit in 2014/15 reduced to £0.54.[1]

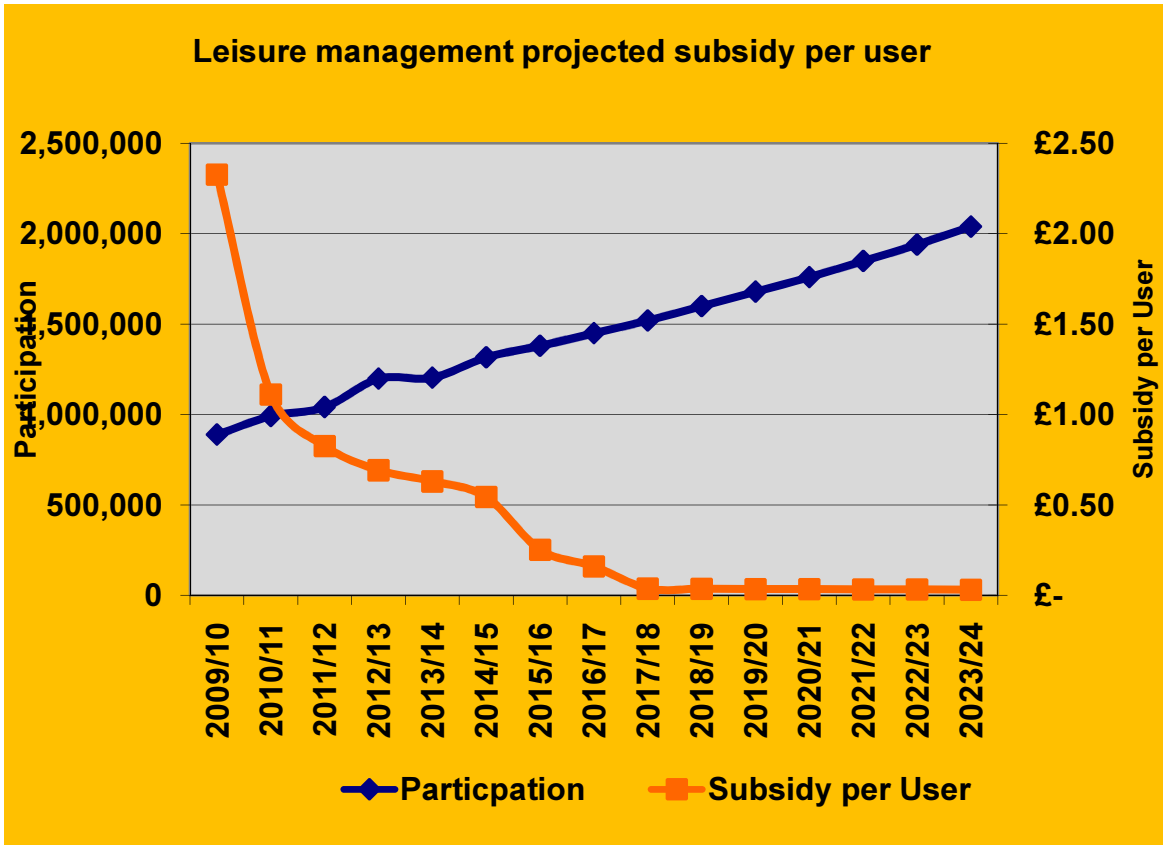
2.3 The 2014/15 subsidy per visit by facility is demonstrated in Appendix Two -Leisure Centre Subsidy per visit by Facility 2014/15.

2.4 Competitor benchmarking against neighbouring leisure providers demonstrated that fees and charges in city leisure facilities continue to be at least comparable.

2.5 Since commencement of the contract there has been no increase to the price of the Bonus concessionary membership scheme. This offer gives those in receipt of one of 15 eligible benefits, and their dependents, reduced rates on activities at all our leisure facilities.

2.6 The five year extension to April 2024 guarantees a saving to the Council, resulting in the operation of the leisure centres reducing to approximately zero cost by 2017/18.

[1] Previous years' figures have been restated to include the supplemental agreement management fee, plus utilities adjustments in line with the contract.

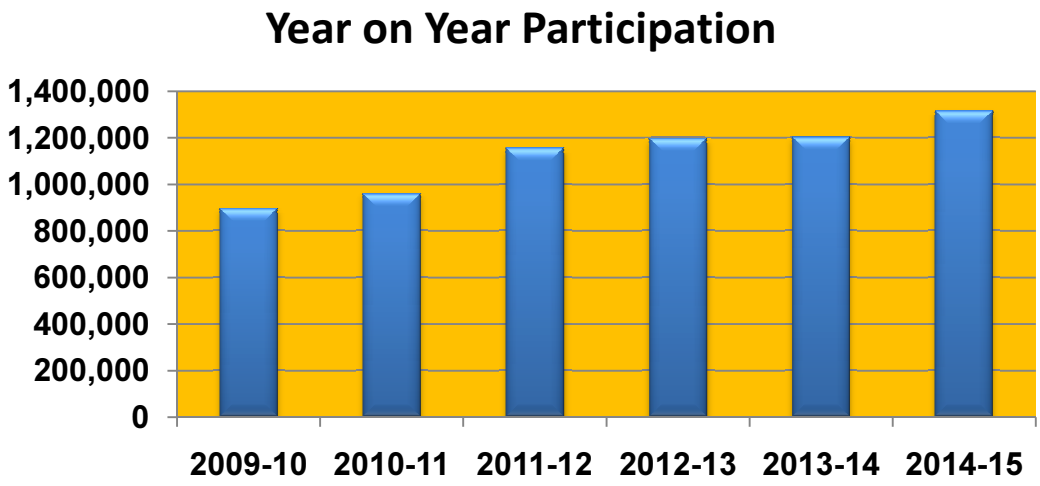


2.7 Savings from the contract with Fusion are already reflected in the council's budget and the risk for achieving these is Fusion's.

2.8 The management agreement contains provisions to share profits that are made above those agreed when the contract was agreed.No overall surplus above contracted performance was achieved in the 2014/15 period, so profit share arrangement does not apply.

Participation

3.2 The overall number of visits to leisure facilities in 2014/15,more than 1.3 million,increased 53 per cent since contract commencement; 450,000more visits per annum when compared with the period prior to the transfer to Fusion. (Appendix Three - Leisure Centre visits 2008 to 2015;Appendix Four Leisure Centre visits 2014 to 2015).



3.5 In 2014/15 the number of visits to leisure facilities by target groups increased 134per cent from the 2009/10 baseline year.The biggest percentage uplift is in target groups. 276,000 more visits per annum to leisure facilities when compared with the first year of the contract.

	Visits 2009/10	Visits 2014/15
Young People	70,866	169,586
Older People	42,684	107,814
People with Disabilities	5,046	17,072
People from Ethnic Minorities	17,406	86,379
Users from areas of deprivation	70,115	101,159

(Appendix Five -Leisure Centre Target group visits 2010 to 2015)

3.6 The number of visits by Women and Girls has increased 6 per cent year on year; an increase of more than 24,500 visits. Leys Pools and Leisure Centre had a noted increase of more than 36,000 visits for women and girls.

3.7 Swimming by older people has increased year on year by 55 per cent; just under 12,500 more visits.

3.8 Under 17's free swimming increased year on year 36 per cent; more than 13,400 visits.

3.9 More than 104,000 Learn 2 swim programme and schools swimming lessons were completed in 2014/15.

Sports and Community Development

4.1 Fusion's Oxford Sports and Community Development Manager (SCD) works closely with the Council's existing team and with other relevant partners to identify and deliver effective sports development processes and delivery.

4.2 The SCD Manager works alongside the Oxford Divisional Business Manager and each of the General Managers to develop facility sport programmes, to work with local partners and to create a structure for successful delivery of sport and physical activity across facilities.

4.3 Fusion work with a wide range of National Governing Bodies recognised by Sport England, such as:

- Amateur Swimming Association
- English Squash and Racketball
- Badminton England
- National Ice Skating Association
- Royal Lifesaving Society
- British Gymnastics

4.4 Examples of local stakeholders include:

- City of Oxford Swimming Club
- Community Organisations
- Education and schools
- Older & Youth People representatives
- Oxford Sports Partnership
- Oxford Swans Disability Swimming
- Oxfordshire County Council
- Public Health practitioners
- User Group representatives

4.5 Working in partnership with the Council,Fusions Commonwealth Games event at Leys Pools and Leisure Centre engaged more than 350 city primary school pupils.

- Orchard Meadow
- Windale Primary
- St Mary and St John.

The event consisted of 25 minute taster sessions of Commonwealth Games sports, including netball, badminton, athletics, table tennis and boxing fitness. The event was divided up into morning sessions for years 3 and 4 students and afternoon sessions for years 5 and 6.

4.6 Working in partnership with Oxford Community Badminton Network consisting of representatives from Oxfordshire Sports Partnership, Oxford City Council and Oxfordshire Badminton, 95 young people engaged with a Badminton Bisi[2] Festival.

4.7 Fun Fitness Sessions were delivered to approximately 500 children across city primary school events including:

- Commonwealth Baton Relay Event
- Headington World Sports Day

4.8 50 young people from local primary schools visited the Leys Pools and Leisure Centre for a water safety talk provided by Fusion followed by a tour of the development site.

4.9 Fusion attended a wide range of community outreach events across the city including:

Headington Festival & Family Sports Day	Oxford Brookes Fresher's Fair
Baton Relay Event - Cutteslowe	National Older Peoples Day Event
Rose Hill Activity Day	Oxford University Fresher's Fair
Barton Bash	Florence Park Festival
Blackbird Leys Fair	Littlemore Play day
More Life Weight Management group talks	

At each event they offered a row challenge and took the Oxford Mascots Marvin the penguin or Ollie the Octopus. (Appendix – Sports and Community Development Outreach pictures).

4.10 Other projects delivered by Fusion include:

- Successfully transferringthe learn to swim programme from two closed centre across to the Leys Pools and Leisure Centre
- A new swim school on-line management system - Learn 2 –was introduced to Oxford pools and swimming instructors. A parent portal will follow soon giving real time updates on pupil progression.
- Successful mapping for development of the Learn 2 swim programme have swimming stages 1 to 7 being available at one time.
- Creation of a new group working with the City of Oxford Swimming Club to reduce drop out from swimming from the club and create an exit route from learn to swim programme.

[2]Bisi Badminton Festivals are an introduction to badminton. Festival activities are intended to provide success for all and opportunity for differentiation

- Exercise on Referral scheme; generating 126 users.
- Enhancing partnerships with Badminton England – Leys Pools and Leisure Centre and Ferry Leisure Centre are play badminton sites
- Creating new 50+ weekly programmes.
- Winter swim at Hinksey Outdoor Pool; 88 swimmers taking part.

Carbon Management

5.1 A reduction in CO_2 has been achieved against a backdrop of a large increase in participation in 2015/ 16 compared to the previous year. A ca18 per cent reduction in CO_2 per visitor has been observed which indicates good progress[3] with data as follows:

2.38 CO_2 per visit /kgCO_2 in 2014/ 15 compared to 2.92 in 2013/14

5.2 Further detail per site is shown in the two tables in Appendix Seven (a) - Carbon measurements 2013 to 2015 – Including facilities closed in December 2014 and Appendix Seven (b) - Carbon measurements 2013 to 2015 – with Leys Pools and Leisure Centre open, December 2014.

5.3 The council Energy team assisted by the Leisure team has continued to work with Fusion to implement energy efficiency/carbon reduction projects in leisure centres throughout the year.

5.4 In March 2015 a trial of two boiler optimisation units (M2Gs) at Barton Leisure Centre commenced with the aim of reducing unnecessary gas consumption due to boiler standing losses (dry-cycling). The proposed savings achievable are 12 per cent based on typical savings achieved with M2G units which equates to estimated savings of around £3,168 per year or 19.5 tonnes of CO_2 per year. The units are being monitored using the smart meters at the centre (which give more detailed consumption data) over the summer 2015 to assess performance in more detail.

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5.5 Energy efficiency/carbon reduction projects to reduce electricity consumption, CO_2 emissions and energy costs have been implemented at Leys Pools and Leisure Centre with low energy lighting and controls being installed in the Sports Hall and also the Gym suite areas. The Sports Hall lighting project, (Appendix Eight - Leys Pools and Leisure Centre Sports Hall Lighting) is estimated to reduce:

[3] CO_2 per footfall is a metric endorsed by BSi Energy Standards – although not always a total causal link between footfall and consumption it's still a useful metric/benchmarking activity.

- electricity consumption at the site by 41,800kWh
- annual electricity spend by an estimated **£5,024**
- carbon emissions by around **22.6 tCO_2** per year

The Gym lighting project, where LED lights and controls have been installed at the Leys Pools and Leisure Centre, is estimated to reduce:

- electricity consumption at the site by 26,000kWh
- annual electricity spend by an estimated **£3,118**
- carbon emissions by around **14 tCO_2** per year

Quality Assurance

6.1 A Performance Failure occurs in the event that Fusion fails to meet the requirements of the Performance Standards. In the case of failures, Fusion are given a defined rectification period in which to correct the failure without incurring any deduction.

6.2 Performance Failure that is not rectified within the relevant Rectification Period is deducted from the core management fee payment, this equated to a deduction payment of £10,250 in 2014/15.

6.3 Fusion has maintained International Standards 14001, 14002[4] and 9001[5] following external assessments.

6.4 Quest is designed primarily as a tool for continuous improvement for the management of leisure facilities and leisure development. It defines industry standards and good practice and encourages on-going development within a customer focused management framework.[6]

6.5 Five leisure facilities continue to be accredited with the UK quality award scheme for sport and leisure, *QUEST:*

[4] ISO14001 and 14002 are a family of standards related to environmental management that exists to help organizations minimize how their operations negatively affect the environment , to comply with applicable laws, regulations, and other environmentally oriented requirements, and continually improve in the above.

[5]The ISO 9001 is astandard related to quality management systems and designed to help organizations ensure that they meet the needs of customers and other stakeholders.

[6], [6] ,[7]Source: Quest Quality Scheme managed on behalf of Sport England by Right Directions in partnership with Leisure-net Solutions

Barton Leisure Centre (Quest Plus - Good)
Leys Pools and Leisure Centre (Quest Plus - Good)
Ferry Leisure Centre (Quest Plus - Good)
Hinksey Outdoor Pool (Quest Entry – Registered)
Oxford Ice Rink (Quest Plus - Good)

[7]Quest Plus is a 2 year cycle made up of:

Year 1

- A mystery visit and a two day assessment. The centre will be assessed on the eight Facility Management core modules on day 1 and 5 modules of their choice on day two (one of these 5 modules will be un-scored.
- The overall bandings range from Unsatisfactory, Satisfactory, Good and Excellent.

Year 2

- A one day review and either an NPS (Net Promoter Closed Loop Survey) or a mystery visit.

[8]Quest Entry is a yearly one day assessment where the centre will receive a mystery visit and a one day assessment on the eight Facility Management core modules of Purpose, People and Operations. The overall bandings are either Unsatisfactory or Registered.

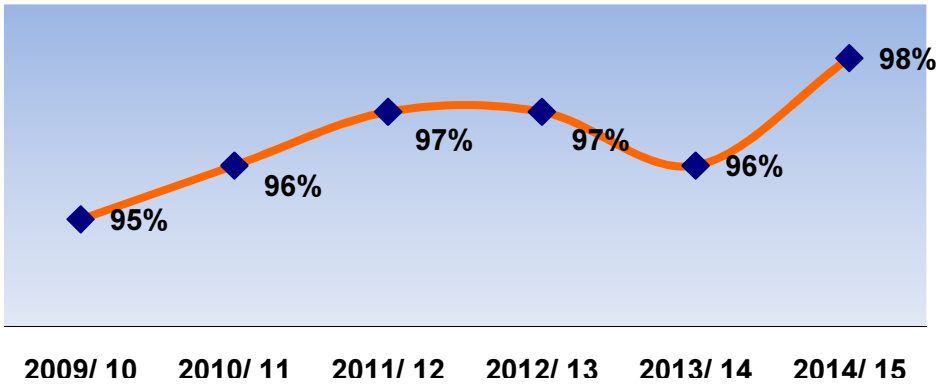
Customer Service

7.1 Fusion Lifestyles customer care process includes an approach to

- Facility presentation
- Customer enquiries and complaints
- Customer comments.

7.2 Overall customer satisfaction[9] in 2014/15 was 98 per cent; overall customer excellence rating was 55 per cent.

Total Customer satisfaction 2009 to 2015



OVERALL % EXCELLENT/GOOD/SATISFACTORY

Knowledgeable, friendly staff	99%
Range of activities	98%
Condition of building	91%
Cleanliness	92%
Value for money	97%
Equipment	95%
Ease of booking and paying	98%
Ease of gaining information	98%
Website	96%

Staffing

9.1 The Oxford Living Wage continues to be paid to employees and those engaged by Fusion in city leisure facilities.

9.2 In 2014/15 Fusions Oxford young apprentice gained full-time employment in a city leisure facility. Fusion are committed in 2015/ 16 to recruiting four apprentices across city facilities.

[9] Customer Satisfaction is measured through Fusions *'Please Tell Us What You Think'* system.

9.3 Just under 3,000 hours of learning and development has been completed by staff; 37 hours per permanent staff member.

Next steps

3.1 Fusions 2015/16 Annual Service Plan was endorsed by the City Executive Board in April 2015. Key objectives include:

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

3.2 There will be an on-going review and monitoring process for the leisure contact with Fusion Lifestyle. This will incorporate management scrutiny, monthly client performance reports, monthly meetings between key representatives of the Council and Fusion, quarterly Leisure Partnership Board meetings and a formal review in advance of the 2016/17 planning process.

Name and contact details of author:-

Name: Ian Brooke
Job title: Head of Leisure, Parks and Communities
Service Area / Department: Leisure, Parks and Communities
Tel: 01865 252705 e-mail: ibrooke@oxford.gov.uk

List of background papers: Fusion Lifestyle Annual Service Plan, 2014 to 2015
Version number: Final

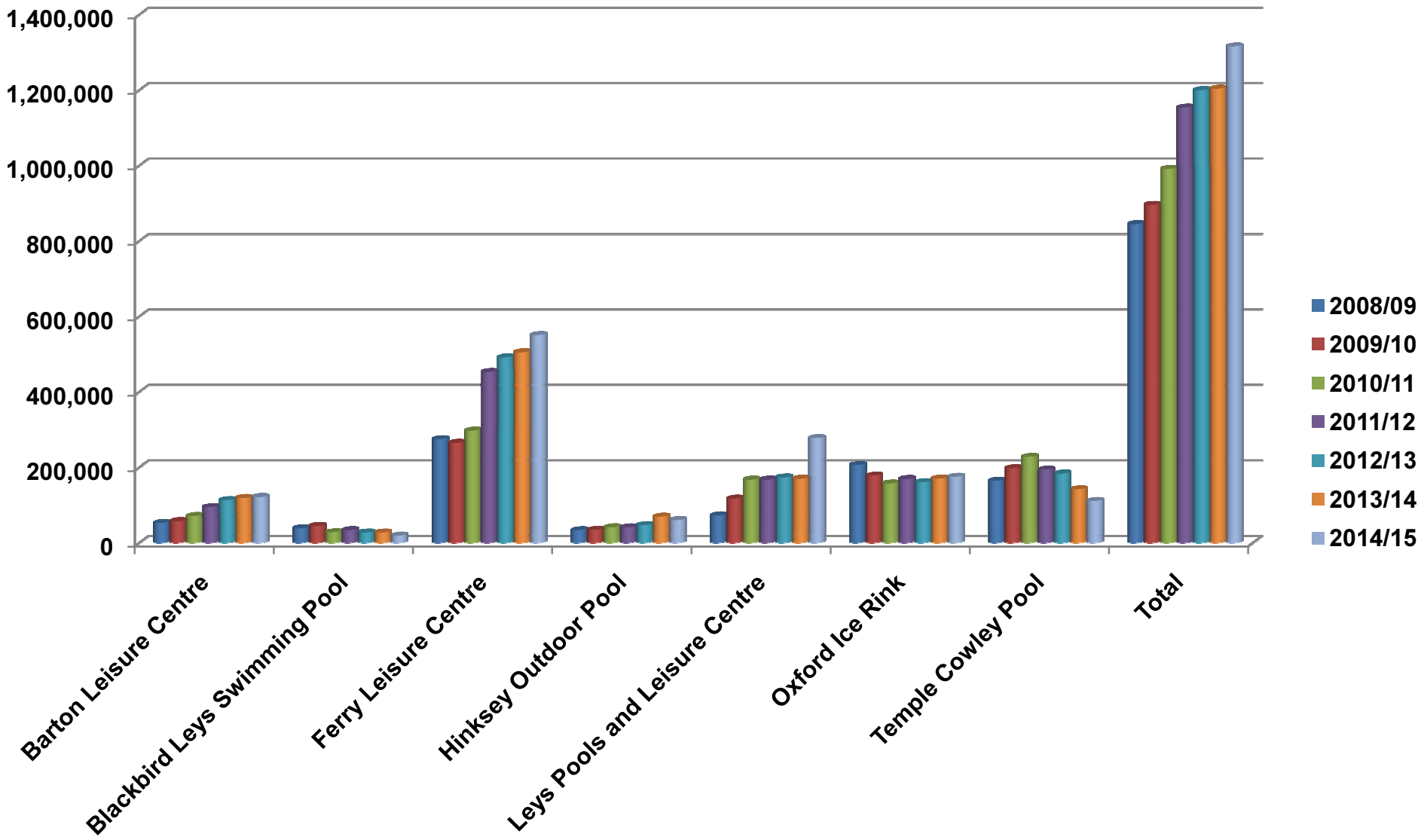
Appendix One – Leisure Centre Capital Investment

Capital Scheme	Year 1 2009/10	Year 2 2010/11	Year 3 2011/12	Year 4 2012/13	Year 5 2013/14	Year 6 2014/15	Total Capital Expenditure
Barton Leisure Centre	10,658	31,730	-	-	-		**42,389**
Blackbird Leys Pool	3,245	55,796	- 0	-	-		**59,040**
Blackbird Leys Leisure Centre	62,932	107,985	-	-	-		**170,917**
Ferry Leisure Centre	28,628	78,942	-	-	-		**107,570**
Hinksey Outdoor Pool (heated)	52,454	86,474	23,501	-	-		**162,429**
Temple Cowley Pool	14,163	84,331	-	-	-		**98,494**
Oxford Ice Rink	40,822	759,309	93,460	-	-		**893,591**
Barton Leisure Centre Improvements	79,815	602,287	173,572	-	-		**855,673**
Blackbird Leys Leisure Centre Improvements	55,372	433,830	-	-	-		**489,202**
Ferry Leisure Centre Improvements	60,117	657,523	1,961	-	-		**719,601**
New Build Competition Standard Pool	-	561,929	355,817	21,337	2,628,073	5,849,953	**9,417,109**
Building Improvements (General Fund Leisure)	-	-	107,316	-	-		**107,316**
Hinksey Pools Main Pool Liner	-	-	-	117,400	-		**117,400**
Leisure Centre Substantive Works	-	-	250,359	174,011	116,171	337,808	**878,349**
Leisure Centre Improvement Work	-	-	-	276,762	4,258	-	**281,019**
Total	**408,206**	**3,460,135**	**1,005,986**	**589,509**	**2,748,502**	**6,287,761**	**14,400,100**

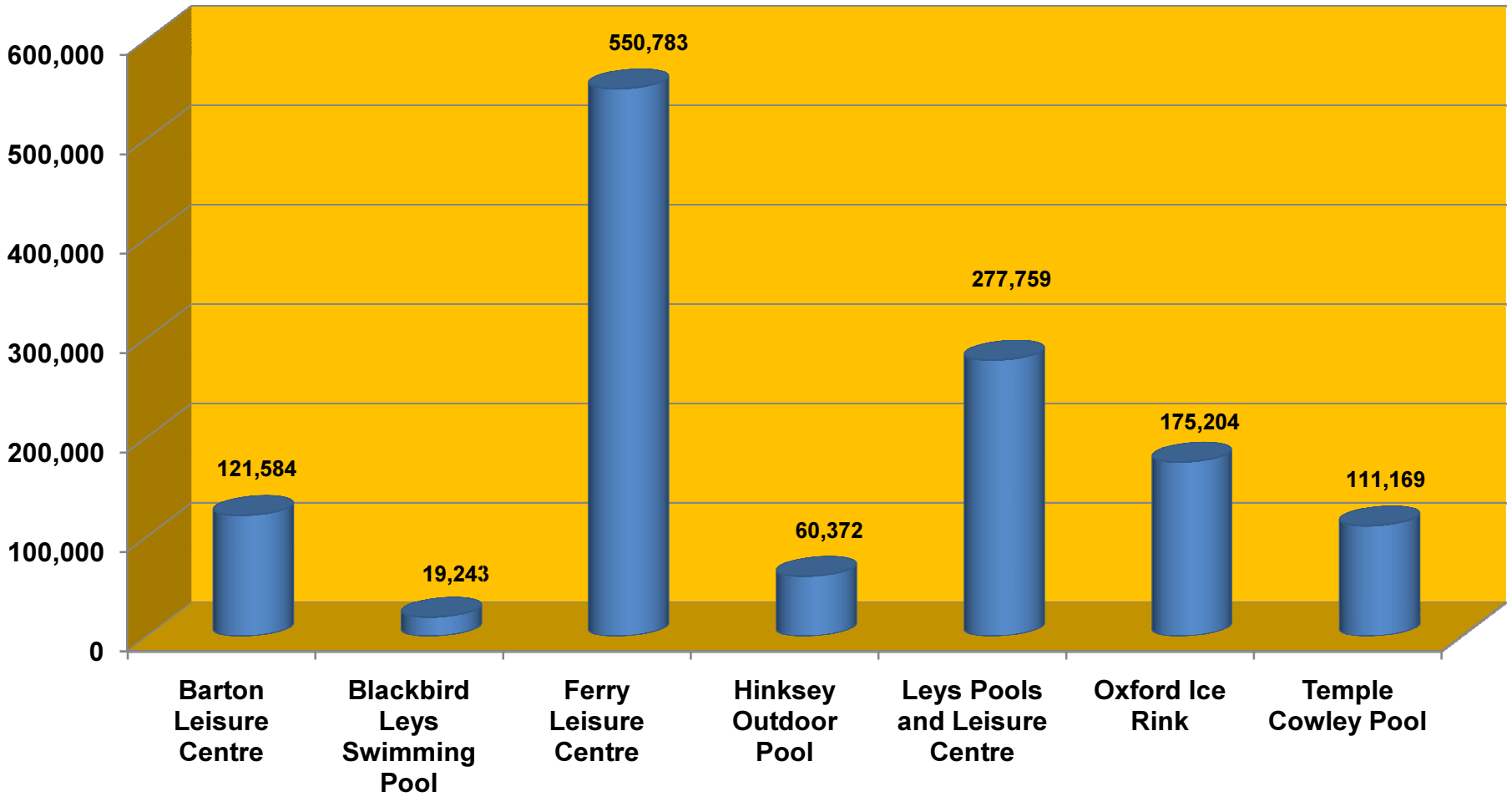
Appendix Two – Leisure Centre Subsidy per visit by Facility, 2014/15

Facility	Subsidy per visit:	
Barton Leisure Centre	**2.05**	
Leys Pool and Leisure Centre	**1.33**	
Blackbird Leys Pool (closed Dec 15)	**5.49**	
Ferry Leisure Centre	**- 0.61**	**Surplus**
Hinksey Outdoor Pool	**3.00**	
Oxford Ice Rink	**- 0.98**	**Surplus**
Temple Cowley Pools (closed Dec 15)	**3.07**	

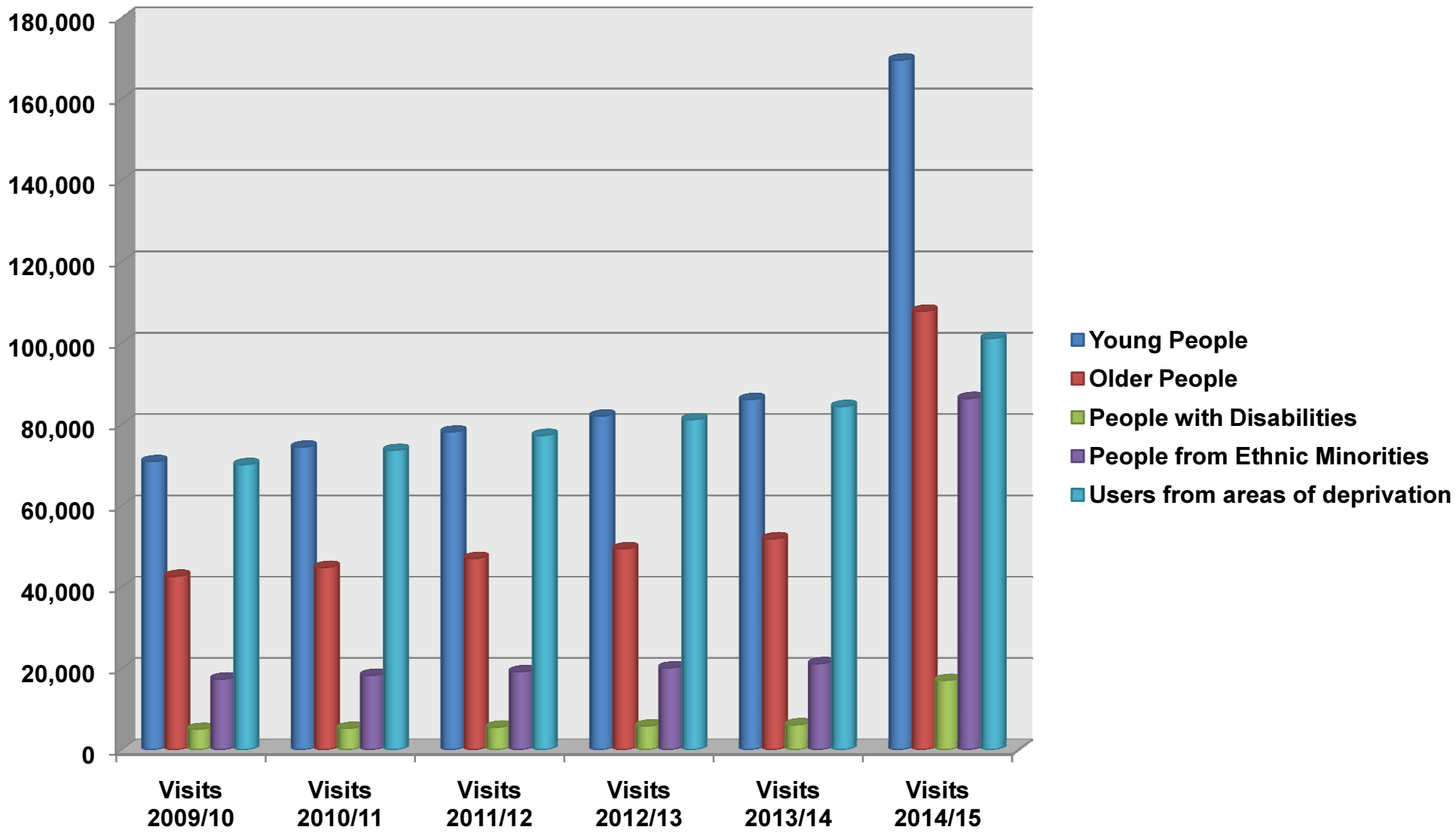
Appendix Three -Leisure Centre visits 2008 to 2015



Appendix Four -Leisure Centre visits 2014 to 2015



Appendix Five- Leisure Centre Target group visits 2009 to 2015



27

Appendix Six – Sports and Community Development Outreach pictures

Appendix Seven (a) Carbon measurements 2013 to 2015 – Including facilities closed in December 2014

CMP Year 1 2013/14

	CO2 per visit /kgCO2
Barton Leisure Centre	3.18
Blackbird Leys Leisure Centre	2.21
Blackbird Leys Pool	6.54
Ferry Leisure Centre	1.14
Hinksey Outdoor Swimming Pool	6.05
Ice Rink	4.49
Temple Cowley Pools	6.80
Totals	**2.92**

CMP Year 2 2014/15

	CO2 per participant/kgCO2
Barton Leisure Centre	2.81
Leys Pools and Leisure Centre	1.62
Blackbird Leys Swimming Pool	5.08
Ferry Leisure Centre	1.07
Hinksey Outdoor Swimming Pool	6.40
Oxford Ice Rink	4.16
Temple Cowley Pools	4.82
Totals	**2.38**

Appendix Seven(b)- Carbon measurements 2013 to 2015 – with Leys Pools and Leisure Centre open, December 2014

CMP Year 1 2013/14

	CO2 per visit /kgCO2
Barton Leisure Centre	3.18
Blackbird Leys Leisure Centre	2.21
Ferry Leisure Centre	1.14
Hinksey Outdoor Swimming Pool	6.05
Oxford Ice Rink	4.49
Totals	**2.43**

CMP Year 2 2014/15

	CO2 per participant/kgCO2
Barton Leisure Centre	2.81
Leys Pools and Leisure Centre	1.62
Ferry Leisure Centre	1.07
Hinksey Outdoor Swimming Pool	6.40
Oxford Ice Rink	4.16
Totals	**2.11**

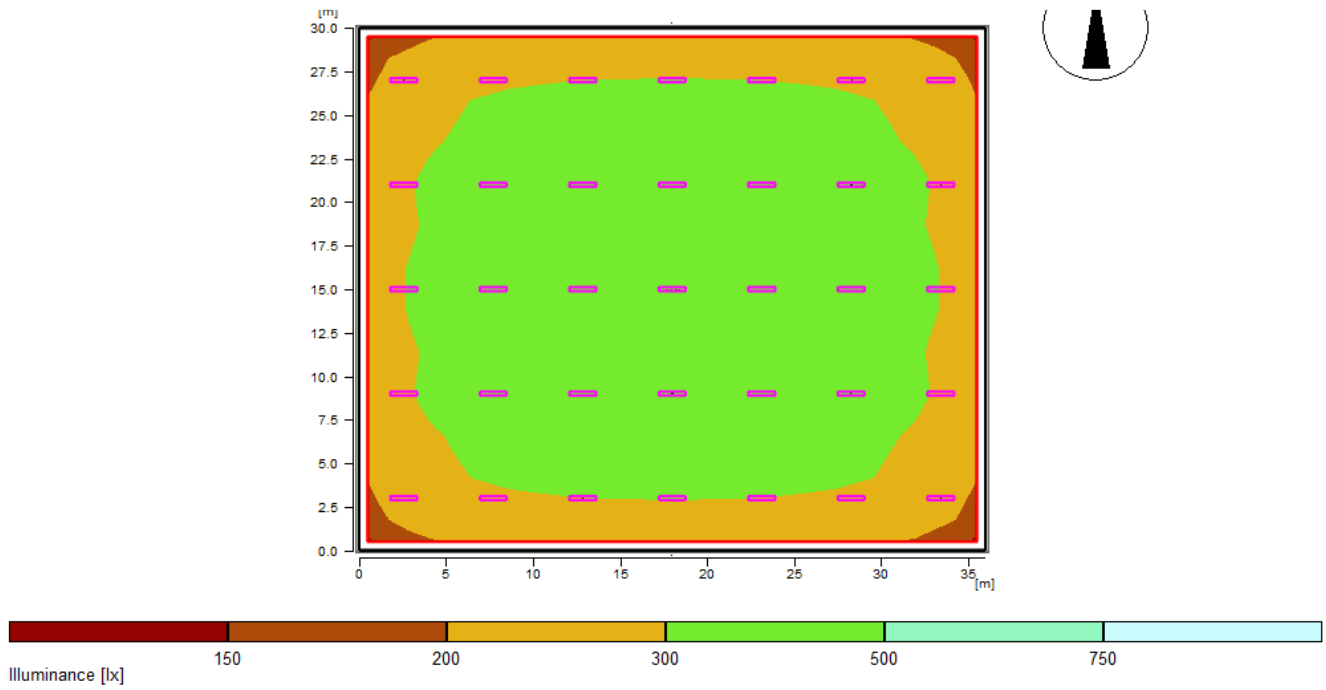
Appendix EightLeys Pools and Leisure Centre Sports Hall Lighting

1. Project brief:

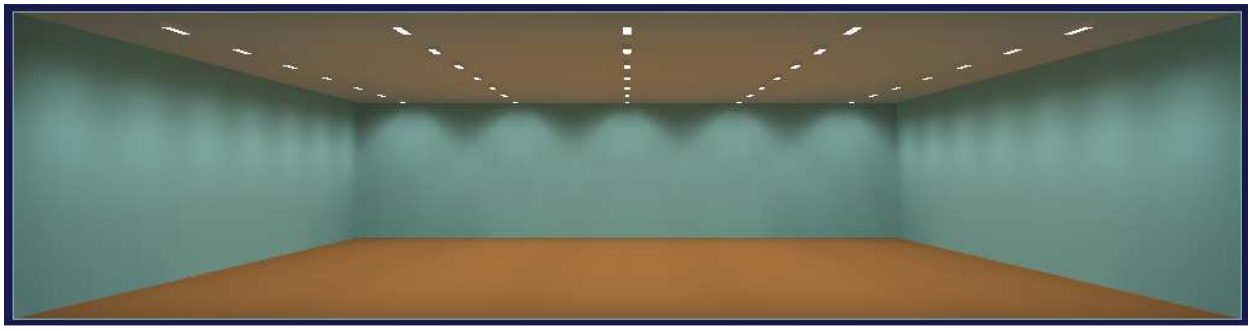
The purpose of this project is to **reduce electricity consumption at the site**, by specifying higher efficiency lighting with occupancy controls. This will result in **lower electricity costs associated with a reduced lighting demand** by the building.

The proposal specifies replacing the existing gas discharge high-bay lighting with efficient T5 fluorescent lighting and incorporating occupancy sensors to turn off lighting when the hall is vacant. These measures exceed Building Regulations and will improve the energy efficiency of the building.

A lighting simulation has been completed using Relux software with photometric data supplied by the manufacturer, which has produced the following calculation data and visual representation:



General		
Calculation algorithm used		Average indirect fraction
Height of evaluation surface		0.50 m
Height of luminaire plane		7.50 m
Maintenance factor		0.80
Total luminous flux of all lamps		602000 lm
Total power		7525.0 W
Total power per area		6.97 W/m² (1080.00 m²)
Evaluation area 1	**Reference plane 1.1**	
	Horizontal	
Em	319 lx	
Emin	198 lx	
Emin/Eav (Uo)	0.62	
UGR (4.8H 5.8H)	<=26.1	
Position	0.50 m	



These calculations show that at 0.5 metres above floor level, the vast majority of the hall will exceed 300 lux with a uniformity rating (measure of lighting consistency) of 0.62. Sport England (Artificial Sports Lighting – Updated guidance for 2012) and British Standard (EN 12193:2007 Light and Lighting – Sports Lighting) quote 300 lux and a uniformity rating of 0.7 for most indoor sports at Class III: Community 'level of play'. Visually there should also be a significant improvement in light levels compared to the existing setup.

2. Anticipated savings:

The survey, including estimated kWh/CO_2 savings, was undertaken by the Council's Energy & Climate Change team, whilst project management including sourcing and installing the equipment will be undertaken by Fusion Lifestyle (the Council's leisure provider) using their approved contractors.

The electricity savings estimates calculated by the Council's Energy & Climate Change team are summarised in the following tables using the assumptions detailed below:

- Control gear in the existing luminaires consumes 15% of the rated lamp wattage
- Lighting in the sports hall is currently operational for 75% of the centre's opening hours
- Occupancy controls will reduce the lighting operation time by 30%

The inclusion of occupancy controls will considerably reduce the payback period through delivering significant electricity savings for a small additional investment. The lighting manufacturer has advised on the most appropriate controls based on the existing wiring setup; this has now been confirmed and agreed with the installer and additional costs provided.

3. Payback calculations

ANNUAL RUNNING COSTS			
	Units	**Rate**	**Cost**
Existing gas discharge lighting with no control	63,104 kWh	£0.12 / kWh[10]	£7,572
Replacement fluorescent lighting with occupancy control	21,241 kWh	£0.12 / kWh	£2,549
ELECTRICITY SAVING	**41,863 kWh**		**£5,023**

PROJECT COSTS	
Supply and installation of high frequency T5 fluorescent (4x49W) fittings suitable for sports halls	£12,410
Supply and installation of two occupancy sensors to control light fittings [*costs confirmed following survey by installers]*	£2007.36
TOTAL PROJECT COST	**£14,417.68**

PAYBACK	
Project payback period	2.9 years
CO_2 reduction per annum	22.6 tonnes

4. Salix compliance

This project qualifies for use of Salix[11] funding and is ready to proceed towards installation and completion.

Total technical cost proposed: **£14,417.68**

Total project cost (plus 10% Salix fund management): **£15,859.44**

5. Salix funding mechanism

On agreement to proceed with this project it is proposed that Fusion Lifestyle take on the overall project management including sourcing and installation of the equipment.

This is to include placing of the order and instructing the supplier/contractor to invoice Oxford City Council (quoting the relevant Salix Project codes on any invoicing).

[10] Expected average unit rate over the payback period

[11] Salix funding is interest-free capital to the public sector to improve their energy efficiency and reduce their carbon emissions

Upon full commissioning of the installation, the savings will begin to be accrued.

A year after the agreed commissioning date, the first loan payment back into the fund would be due, paid over the following four years (based on the savings estimates - **3 x annual payments of approximately £5024 per year in the first three years and one final payment of £787.44**). As Salix is a revolving loan fund, loan repayments go back into the Salix fund which can then be used for other Salix funded energy reduction projects across Oxford City Council buildings.

Overall the project will:

- Reduce electricity consumption at the site
- Reduce annual electricity spend by an estimated **£5,024**
- Reduce carbon emissions by around **22.6 tCO_2** per year
- Provide a more balanced way of funding the installation in smaller annual payments making full use of the available Salix fund

To: City Executive Board

Date: **9 July 2015**

Report of: **Head of Community Services**

Report: **Grant Monitoring Information for 2014/15**

Summary and Recommendations

Purpose of report: To inform members of monitoring information returned by community & voluntary organisations awarded a grant by the City Council in 2014/15.

Key decision? No

Executive lead member: Councillor Rowley, Executive Board Member for Leisure, Parks and Sport

Policy Framework: Oxford City Council Corporate Plan primarily Strong & Active Communities

Recommendation(s):

The City Executive Board is ASKED to note the report.

Appendices to report

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

Introduction

1. The Communities team ran four grant programmes during 2014/15. These programmes are in accordance with policy and prospectus agreed by Members.

   The four grant programmes were:-

- Community & Voluntary Organisations (CVO's) Grants Programme
- Youth Ambition Grants Programme
- Social Inclusion Fund
- Positive Futures Holiday Activities (monitoring feedback for this programme is reported separately and will be going to CEB later in the year)

Table 1 below shows the allocations and expenditure.

Table 1	**Budget Approved (£)**	**Amount spent (£)**
CVO's grant programme		
Advice & money management	536,379	536,379
Homelessness	442,279	442,279
Inclusive arts & culture	255,262	255,262
Community safety	58,082	58,082
Community & voluntary sector infrastructure	48,736	48,736
Inclusive play & leisure for children & young people with disabilities.	15,000	15,000
2014/15 annual open bidding programme	97,700	97,700
Small grants programme	23,027	14,671
Youth Ambition grants programme	85,000	85,000
Social Inclusion Fund	60,000	47,316
underspend	0	21,040
Totals	1,621,465	1,621,465

2. The underspend is from the small grants programme and social inclusion fund. This is a result of careful evaluation and assessment of applications to establish what is needed for a project to be delivered.

3. During 2014/15, grants were awarded to 108 community and voluntary organisations and artists. The funding supported the delivery of a variety of projects from small community events to welfare benefits advice, community safety projects, training for volunteers and focused work with young people and the arts.

4. The majority of the groups funded through these programmes have received grant funding in previous years. However through the annual open bidding, small grants, social inclusion fund and youth ambition grants programmes 12 new organisations that the Council has not funded before were awarded a grant. Through our community engagement work more minority groups are being made more aware of the grant programmes and to promote the grant programmes wider social media mechanisms such as Facebook and Twitter are now being used.

5. £21,000 from the budget was made available for the commissioning of inclusive arts directly from the Arts & Culture team's core budget. (Details of how this funding was spent can be found in Appendix 1).

Process for gathering monitoring information

6. One of the conditions for funding is that organisations agree to provide feedback. This is generally by completing a monitoring form, site visit by officer(s) or a combination of both.

7. Monitoring ensures that the funding is used for the purpose it was given and gather evidence of the impact of the grant funding. It also provides the opportunity to find out if there are any external factors affecting the voluntary sector and how the organisation is weathering those effects.

8. At the 3rd July 2014 meeting of the City Executive Board it was agreed that for those organisations that fail to return monitoring information they will incur a penalty. The penalty is that the organisation will not be eligible for funding for one year and funding awarded to them will be reclaimed. All organisations funded in 2014/15 were written to notifying them of the change.

9. From April 2015 it was reiterated in their award letters informing them of the dates when their completed monitoring forms are due back and reminding them about the penalty. For the future, terms and conditions for grant funding will be updated to ensure funded organisations are aware that funding will be clawed back if monitoring is not returned.

10. The process for dealing with non-returns is as follows:

    - Three weeks past the deadline a reminder is sent out with a copy of the monitoring form and the organisation is informed that if monitoring is not returned this will impact on any future funding requests the Council may receive from them.
    - Five weeks past the deadline a second reminder is sent with a copy of the monitoring form followed up by email or telephone call reminding them about the penalty the organisation can incur if monitoring is not returned.
    - If there is still no response a letter will be sent to the organisation to inform them that by not returning their monitoring information they are not eligible for funding for one financial year and an invoice is raised reclaiming the funding awarded to them.

11. The majority of organisations respond to the first reminder. All organisations have returned their monitoring information for 2014/15.

Addressing Council Priorities

12. The community grants programme provides funding to a range of community and voluntary organisations who help deliver Corporate Plan objectives.

13. Groups funded through the open bidding, small grants, social inclusion and youth ambition programmes deliver activities and events that bring

communities together building community cohesion supporting the Corporate Priority of Strong, Active Communities.

14 Voluntary organisations funded through the grants commissioning programme will be delivering services that have been identified by the Council as making a substantial contribution to the achievement of our corporate goals and supporting people in need from the most disadvantaged groups in the city.

Challenging Funding Environment for the Voluntary Sector

15. Since the Government's Comprehensive Spending Review in 2007 generally funding for the voluntary sector has slowly declined.

16. Through monitoring we are seeing stretched voluntary sector organisations spending more of their reserves on direct charity activity costs such as staff and bills.

17. Funding cuts are making themselves felt and with fewer funding sources available there is an increasing demand to grants providers.

18. Oxford City Council is receiving applications from organisations that in previous years would not have applied for funding such as those delivering care services and a far increased demand from organisations working with children and young people.

19. This was evidenced recently in March when the 2015/16 Youth Ambition grants programme opened for applications. The programme has a budget of £60,000 and the total amount requested was £101,621 compared to £45,430 in the same round last year. Consequently a review is currently on going to look at what the future implications might be for the Council.

20. We anticipate this trend to continue as further Government cuts are made.

Monitoring Information

21 Appendices 1 and 2 provide the following information:-

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

22. Table 2 below summarises the information listed in Appendix 1 for grants awarded through the 2014/15 Open Bidding Programme.

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

2014/15 Council Priority	Number of projects awarded a grant	Total amount of Grant Awarded	Total of other funding matched or levered in	Number of Beneficiaries from these projects	Some of the things the funding paid for
Strong, Active Communities	21	£97,700	£395,939	8,955 plus 20,000 households that received community newsletters	Community activities & events plus local newsletters

23. Table 3 below summarises the information in Appendix 1 for grants awarded through the small grants programme during 2014/15.

Table 3 - Open Bidding – small grants of up to £1,000

2014/15 Council Priority	Number of projects awarded a grant	Total amount of Grant Awarded	Total of other funding matched or levered in	Number of Beneficiaries from these projects	Some of the things the funding paid for
Strong, Active Communities	20	£13,421	£48,068	16,205	Community events, young people activities

24. Table 4 below summaries the information listed in Appendix 1 for grants awarded through the 2014/15 Youth Ambition grants programme

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

2014-15 Council Priority	Number of groups funded	Total amount of Grant Awarded	Total of other funding matched or levered in	Number of beneficiaries of these project	Some of the things this funding paid for
Strong, Active Communities	15	£85,000	£123,280	346	Youth sessions, training volunteers, art focused activities and sport in our target areas

25. Table 5 below summaries the information in Appendix 1 for grants awarded through the 2014/15 Social Inclusion Fund.

Table 5 – Open bidding - Summary from the Social Inclusion Fund – grants of up to £7,000

2014/15 Council Priority	Number of projects awarded a grant	Total amount of Grant Awarded (£)	Total of other funding matched or levered in (£)	Number of Beneficiaries from these projects	Some of the things the funding paid for
Strong, Active Communities	11	£47,316	£22,893	1,021	Training, advice, transport for older people and an intergenerational project,

26. Tables 6 & 7 below summarises the information listed in Appendix 1 for grants awarded through the 2014/15 commissioning programme.

Table 6 – Commissioned Grants Summary

2014/15 Commissioning Theme	Number of groups funded	Total amount of Grant Awarded (£)	Total of other funding levered in (£)	Number of Beneficiaries from these projects	Some of the things the funding paid for
Arts	11	£255,262	£3,664,247	140,483	Training in film & digital media, music, Twinning events
Homelessness *	7	£442,279	£4,225,817	922 plus 139 households	Day centres, life skills, specialist workers,
Community Safety	3	£58,082	£107,094	561	Domestic violence outreach, helpline service for victims of sexual violence,
CVO Infrastructure	1	£48,736	£419,355	619 organisations who are members of OCVA of which 53% are in Oxford City	Providing information, support and advice to the voluntary sector.
Specialist Play	1	£15,000	£170,546	146	Supporting disabled

					children to participate in mainstream play
Oxford Credit Union	1	£20,000	n/a	1,156	Provides financial inclusion
Totals	**24**	**£839,359**	**£8,587,059**	**143,268 people, plus 139 households & 619 CVO's**	

* 9 grants were awarded through this programme however two projects were delivered by the Council (Sanctuary Scheme & Pre-Tenancy Training Scheme, see appendix 1 for details of these two projects)

Table 7 - Summary from Commissioned Advice Centres

2014/15 Council Priority	Number of Organisations	Total amount of Grant Awarded (£)	Number of Beneficiaries from these projects	Total Benefit take up (£)	Total amount of Debt Written Off (£)
Strong, Active communities	4	£498,379	10,398	£3,540,081	£901,950

Advice – General Trends

27. Oxford Citizens Advice Bureau (CAB) reported that the income profile of their client's remains weighted towards those with least financial resource. A sample of 1,800 clients who gave information about their income levels in 2014/15 showed that 61% had incomes under £1,000 per month. This is made up of a mixture of things that include:-

    - People in low paid full time work,
    - People in low paid part time work and claiming benefits
    - Or people just claiming benefits

28. Clients looking for help with debt problems continue to be one of the major issues people will visit an advice centre for. The total of client debt dealt with over the year amounts to £8,432,276. Priority debt (rent, mortgage, council tax etc) is still the biggest problem

29. Budgeting skills is built into the work the advice centres do with their clients. Ensuring that each client is helped to understand how their own budget works on a monthly basis and given the skills they need to help keep their finances under control.

Beneficiaries of the Grants Programme

30. The total number of people counted as benefitting from projects and activities funded through these grant programmes was 180,193.

31. It should be noted that one person might well have benefited from more than one project.

Climate Change / Environmental Impact

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

Equalities Impact

33. Grant funding awarded to community and voluntary organisations has a significant and positive impact on equalities and promotes community cohesion. In particular, some grants actively support the achievement of equality by otherwise marginalised groups, such as funding supplied to Oxford Friend, to Oxford Sexual Abuse & Rape Crisis Centre and for a domestic violence case worker.

34. When applying for grant funding each organisation has to supply a copy of their equal opportunities statement to confirm they comply with this legislation

Financial Impact

35. The recommendations have no financial implications.

Legal Implications

36. There are no legal implications

Name and contact details of author:-
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Leisure, Parks & Communities Business Unit
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APPENDIX 1

Grants to Community & Voluntary Organisations

Annual Open Bidding - 2014 / 2015

Grants Awarded under Council Priority - Strong & Active Communities

organisation/project	Grant Awarded (£)	Description of project	Number of people benefiting	Achievements / Outcome	Other funding received for this project (£)
Archway Foundation	£7,500	A project that supports individuals suffering from loneliness.	344	400 individuals held on database, of which 344 are from across Oxford. At any one time they can be in contact with up to 350 people. They have recorded 138 people accessing social sessions and events who have been befriended by volunteers who listen and explore ways to offer further support. Users also have opportunities to meet other people in similar situations and engage in organised events.	£9,496
Ark T Centre	£4,690	A project running activities for the whole community focusing on activities for young people, focusing on music Funding was awarded to target vulnerable young people to offer them the opportunity to perform their own music.	45	45 young people were directly involved with this project, • 7 were involved as crew and 1 helped with filming the music gigs over the year. • There have been 7 music gigs held with 215 people in the audiences. •15 participants recorded and performed their own tracks. • 4 of the young people were NEET who all achieved AQA's accreditation and 2 NEET participants have researched course options at OCVC.	£15,189

APPENDIX 1

Grants to Community & Voluntary Organisations

Annual Open Bidding - 2014 / 2015

Grants Awarded under Council Priority - Strong & Active Communities

Asylum Welcome	£7,500	Asylum Welcome works to help reduce the poverty, suffering and social isolation of asylum seekers and refugees in Oxfordshire. Funding was awarded to contribute towards their core costs to support asylum seekers and refugees living in Oxford. .	327	• 204 individual service users have been support through their information and signposting service. • 68 individual service users have been supported through their education team, this provided 181 hours of in-house ESOL teaching. • Asylum Welcome run a food bank and 609 visits were recorded (this is store cupboard items not fresh food)	£200,253
Blackbird Leys Adventure Playground	£10,000	Funding was awarded to contribute towards the general running costs of the play group. In term time they are open Monday to Friday from 3pm to 5.30pm. During half term and school holidays they are open 10am to 4pm.	143	The average attendance each evening is 25 but during half term or school holidays this goes up to 49 children attending on a daily basis.	£14,605
Blackbird Leys Community Development Initiative	£7,500	The Clockhouse Project - runs activities for local residents over 50, promoting healthy life styles,	199	• Activities and events were held in 7 different community venues around the estate. • 199 (143 Leys residents) older people benefited from 4,000 person hours spent in project activities. • The age range of users was from 50 to 90 plus . .• Feedback from attendees have stated that they have noticed improvements in their health, improved flexibility, feeling more cheerful, joints less painful, sleeping better, easier breathing and more energetic.	£27,356
Cutteslowe Seniors Group	£1,000	A lively supportive group for the over 50's living in the Cutteslowe area. Funding was awarded to contribute towards adapted transport to enable people to attend sessions, outings and events.	30	The funding directly benefited 30 members of this group. It paid for special wheel chair compatible transport that enabled these members to attend events and trips.	£794

APPENDIX 1

Grants to Community & Voluntary Organisations

Annual Open Bidding - 2014 / 2015

Grants Awarded under Council Priority - Strong & Active Communities

Donnington Doorstep Family Centre	£7,500	A free drop in facility for young people aged 8-18 years old that aims to improve the knowledge of those attending with a better understanding of what it means to be healthy, stay safe, enjoy and achieve.	324	In 2014/15 this project had 324 C&YP registered, of which 135 used the drop in facility from April 2014.. Of this number 52 have received 1 to 1 support. This support can vary from intensive working with the family to just needing a little extra help assessing the sessions..	£33,764
Florence Park Community Association	£2,080	Funding was awarded to contribute towards appointing a coordinator to look at ways to deliver an over 60's film and social club	0	This project has been delayed because they have had problems recruiting but currently have someone interested. Permission has been given for them to continue the project into 2015/16. we will report on progress in the next monitoring report.	£0
Innovista - Thrive Project	£2,892	Funding was awarded for the Thrive mentoring programme to engage with 6 vulnerable girls on Barton.	10	5 young girls identified as vulnerable and at 'high risk' of anti social behaviour or being victims of sexual grooming engaged with the programme. The 5 mentors they worked with benefited from new skills and knowledge. After the first evaluation the mentees were asked what difference their mentor has helped make to their lives, 100% agreed that they felt their future looked more positive as a result.	£14,000

APPENDIX 1

Grants to Community & Voluntary Organisations

Annual Open Bidding - 2014 / 2015

Grants Awarded under Council Priority - Strong & Active Communities

Leys News	£10,000	An initiative that supports community groups with editorial guidance and publishing their newsletters	60 local people and 20,000 households benefiting from free community newsletters	Last year 35 local residents were trained in community journalism and local newsletter groups were supported in Barton, Rose Hill, Cowley, Wood Farm to publish and produce their own local newsletters. Leys News - 6000 copies printed and delivered each month Cowley News - 3500 copies printed & delivered each quarter Barton - 2500 copies printed & delivered each quarter Wood Farm News - 2000 copies printed and delivered bi monthly Rose Hill News - 3000 copies printed and delivered bi monthly .	£10,115
My Life My Choice	£2,800	Funding was awarded to contribute towards an awareness raising programme, specifically to cover the training need of 8 champions from Oxford and a 4 minute film	20 (8 from Oxford)	20 people with a learning disability received training and gained confidence and new skills through confidence building sessions, media and PR skills.	£6,262
Open Door	£3,250	Funding was awarded to contribute towards providing a weekly drop in service for refugees and asylum seekers.	200	Over the year 200 refugees or asylum seekers have used the weekly drop in centre. • 50 individuals have been referred to other services. Some of the users have health and other problems which means that they often need help with phone calls, visits to the GP or support going to other agencies.	£8,600
Oxford Friend	£3,000	A confidential telephone help line, advice, support and counselling to Oxfords gay men, lesbian, bisexual community, their family and friends	336	Telephone service is open 3 evenings a week from 7pm-9pm throughout the year. Volunteers have handled 152 active calls and 184 emails	£1,217
Oxford Urban Wildlife Trust	£2,240	Funding was awarded to contribute towards the general running costs of Boundary Brook Nature Park	651	651 people have been recorded visiting the nature park, attending walks and talks or open days that the group has delivered.	£9,976

APPENDIX 1

Grants to Community & Voluntary Organisations

Annual Open Bidding - 2014 / 2015

Grants Awarded under Council Priority - Strong & Active Communities

Oxfordshire Chinese Community & Advice Centre	£1,740	A series of exercise sessions for the elderly and bilingual talks on healthy lifestyles	183	Over the year they recorded:- • 163 people taking part in seated exercise & fitness sessions for the elderly, • 175 people attended bilingual talks on healthy eating and lifestyles • 229 people participated in walks.	£1,479
Oxfordshire Play Association	£1,250	Funding was awarded to contribute towards organising and delivering an inclusive event that celebrates National Play Day.	300	The event took place on the 28.06.14 at the Oxford Road Recreation Ground in Littlemore. Unfortunately due to heavy rain prior to the event not as many people turned up but 11 local groups had stalls and one local parent said "it was good to have lots of activities that we do not normally get in Littlemore".	£1,774
Reducing the Risk of Domestic Abuse	£1,500	Funding was awarded as an emergency fund to help victims of domestic abuse get to a safe place.	125	Throughout the year this 125 high risk victims from Oxford have been supported. The funding directly supported 30 victims in the following ways:- • for 6 victims it was used to enable a safe initial meeting place • for 3 victims they supplied a mobile phone so they had a safe means of making calls without the risk of the perpetrator tracing their contacts • for 6 victims is paid for transport for them to flee outside of Oxfordshire • for 5 victims it provided immediate emergency funding for meals, living expenses and baby equipment	£118,287
Restore -Elder Stubbs Festival	£2,258	Elder Stubbs Festival - An annual event promoting mental health awareness and bringing the community together.	3,000	Service users were closely involved in every level of planning and running the event, demonstrating their capabilities and dispelling myths about mental health. Interactive community activities during the day contributed to bringing people together and creating a community.	£0

APPENDIX 1

Grants to Community & Voluntary Organisations

Annual Open Bidding - 2014 / 2015

Grants Awarded under Council Priority - Strong & Active Communities

Science Oxford	£2,000	funding awarded to contribute towards the Oxford Festival of Nature	1,500	An interactive 2 day event that saw an estimated 1500 residents finding out about the wildlife in Cutteslowe Park.	£0
South Oxford Adventure Playground	£10,000	A facility that offers play and recreation opportunities for children & young people aged 5-15 years old.	1,167	The adventure playground was open for the Easter, Summer and Autumn holidays, offering safe recreational activities for C&YP from across the city.	£21,800
Wood Farm Youth Club	£7,000	Funding awarded to contribute towards the running costs of Wood Farm youth club	80	Over the year 80 local children & young people have engaged with the youth club, on average 25 attend weekly sessions on a regular basis.	£2,170

Total amount awarded	**£97,700**	**Total number of beneficiaries**	**8,955 plus 20,000 households**	**Total other funding levered in**	**£497,137**

APPENDIX 1

Grants to Community & Voluntary Organisations / Groups

Small Grants awarded in 2014 / 2015

organisation/project	Grant Awarded (£)	Description of project	Number of people who benefited	Achievements	Other funding received for this project (£)
Old Marstons Over 50's Club	£500	A thriving club that has been on going for 11 years, with over 80 members. Funding awarded to subsidise speakers fees and social activities	85	During the year they had 9 speakers on subjects that vary from health to walking in France, 4 outings to places of interest & 5 events.	£1,386
Oxfordshire Play Association	£1,000	Funding was awarded to contribute towards the organising and running the Leys Festival on 06.09.14	2,000	A well attended and successful event that took place as planned. Over 40 community and voluntary organisations participated in some way either by having a stall about the work they do or delivering an activity	£3,047
Oxford Hindu Temple & Community Centre Project	£1,000	Funding was awarded to contribute towards the costs of organising and running the 2014 Oxford Summer Mela.	400	A group of 5 people met regularly and with the help of 20 volunteers on the day enabled the event to take place. It was a successful multi cultural event to which 400 local people attended from across the city.	£2,875

APPENDIX 1

Grants to Community & Voluntary Organisations / Groups

Small Grants awarded in 2014 / 2015

organisation/project	Grant Awarded (£)	Description of project	Number of people who benefited	Achievements	Other funding received for this project (£)
Oxford Polish Association	£1,000	Funding was awarded to contribute towards the costs to organise and deliver 10 inclusive events to celebrate the 10th anniversary of Poland accession to the European Union.	2,613	This turned out to be a successful variety of events that brought together families from all cultures that celebrated diversity. The events took place across the city to give everyone the opportunity to attend an event close to where they lived. The Oxford Polish Associations facebook page had over 11,500 viewers and 7000 hits on the project website. Reaching a large audience was one of their main targets and raising awareness of the culture of integration, tolerance and co-operation.	£6,500

APPENDIX 1

Grants to Community & Voluntary Organisations / Groups

Small Grants awarded in 2014 / 2015

organisation/project	Grant Awarded (£)	Description of project	Number of people who benefited	Achievements	Other funding received for this project (£)
Churches Together in Headington	£300	Funding was awarded to contribute towards the insurance charges for the Headington Summer Festival in 2014	1,500	A team of 7 local people met regularly in the months leading up to the event to ensure the event went well. The event took place in July 2014 and up to 1500 attended making it a successful event.	£2,595
Rose Hill Junior Youth Club	£1,000	Funding was awarded to contribute towards the costs for a sports leader for the Rose Hill Junior Youth Club	80	The Junior youth club sessions average 80 children each week, of those children at least 40% will be involved with sport activities and 60% in some form of physical activity.	£7,450
Friends of Florence Park	£710	Funding was awarded to contribute towards the costs of having a history tent at the 80th birthday celebration of Florence Park.	4,000	It was estimated that 4000 people attending the 80th birthday celebration of Florence Park and the history tent was steadily full throughout the 6 hours of the event.	£300

APPENDIX 1

Grants to Community & Voluntary Organisations / Groups

Small Grants awarded in 2014 / 2015

organisation/project	Grant Awarded (£)	Description of project	Number of people who benefited	Achievements	Other funding received for this project (£)
Brand New Start	£750	Funding was awarded to engage with 8 homeless young people and offer them the opportunity to gain creative writing skills	6	Although attendance was not consistent one young person achieved an arts award and another has been inspired to attend further sessions with Brand New Start learning about event management	£1,000
Oxford Institute of Popular Ageing	£769	Funding was awarded to contribute towards organising and running an event targeting older people in Oxford called Old is the New Young Festival	450	The event took place in October 2014 and was a successful day to which 450 people were recorded as attending	£0
Film Oxford	£500	Funding was awarded to contribute towards repairs of Howard Street community garden and entertainment for the street party to celebrate 10 years when the garden was established.	500	Over the cause of the day up to 500 local people came together to celebrate when the community garden was created, The party was attended by all age groups from the very young to older residents. The Nepalese restaurant supplied the curry evening meal.	£200

APPENDIX 1

Grants to Community & Voluntary Organisations / Groups

Small Grants awarded in 2014 / 2015

organisation/project	Grant Awarded (£)	Description of project	Number of people who benefited	Achievements	Other funding received for this project (£)
Cheney Falcon Rowing Club	£580	Funding was awarded to fund 4 young people to complete the British Rowing Leadership course	9	• 3 young people aged 16-17 years old completed the British Rowing Leadership course • 6 young people aged between 12 to 17 completed the British Rowing Young Leaders for indoor rowing. • 20 young people aged between 12 to 16 attend training sessions regularly.	£0
Oxfordshire Association for the Blind	£550	Funding was awarded to organise and deliver 10 dance sessions for visually impaired people	19	These sessions were attended by 10 visually impaired people, 4 sighted guide volunteers and 5 carers. The visually impaired people gained confidence by attending while the carers and volunteers now have an increased awareness of visual impairment as a result of these sessions.	£420

APPENDIX 1

Grants to Community & Voluntary Organisations / Groups

Small Grants awarded in 2014 / 2015

organisation/project	Grant Awarded (£)	Description of project	Number of people who benefited	Achievements	Other funding received for this project (£)
HUBBUB	£1,000	Funding was awarded to raise awareness (Pumpkin Festival) about food waste leading up to and after the 31.10.14 (Halloween)	2,065	• 2,065 Oxford residents directly engaged through participating in workshops, eating soup made from surplus pumpkins and composting. • Pumpkin carving took place at the Leys Community Market • Workshops took place at Rose Hill, Larkrise & Windmill schools at Blackbird Leys on different ways to use pumpkins creatively. • 3.3 tonnes of pumpkins were saved from going to landfill • 1,673 meals were served over the 10 days of the festival using surplus food and pumpkins	£15,500

APPENDIX 1

Grants to Community & Voluntary Organisations / Groups

Small Grants awarded in 2014 / 2015

organisation/project	Grant Awarded (£)	Description of project	Number of people who benefited	Achievements	Other funding received for this project (£)
Jericho Community Association	£850	Funding was awarded to contribute to the organisation and delivery of half term activities for children aged 7 to 12 years old during the February half term school break	18	During the week all of the children engaged with a variety of activities that included sports based activities and arts and crafts. Group sessions and 1 to 1 work also took place with the young people where they talked about the importance of making positive life choices and healthy eating.	£0
Oxfordshire Chinese Community & Advice Centre	£500	Funding awarded to contribute towards an event to celebrate the Chinese New Year	1,100	A celebration attended by 1000 people of which 30% were non Chinese and 70% were from across the city,	£855
Oxford International Women's Festival	£1,000	Funding was awarded to contribute towards printing and distribution of the festival programme	1,000	Across the 10 days of the festival 1000 people (including volunteers) attended a variety of events and activities that took place during this period.	£730

APPENDIX 1

Grants to Community & Voluntary Organisations / Groups

Small Grants awarded in 2014 / 2015

organisation/project	Grant Awarded (£)	Description of project	Number of people who benefited	Achievements	Other funding received for this project (£)
Oxford Wheels Project	£1,000	Funding awarded to contribute towards Girls Skateboard and BMX coaching sessions	0	Funding awarded in the last round of the programme Jan 2015, during the last months of the 14/15 financial year the weather was not suitable to run these coaching sessions. Agreed for funding to be carried over into 15/16 and will be reported on in next monitoring report.	£0
Wolvercote Morris Dancers	£200	Funding was awarded to contribute towards raising awareness of the group and recruiting more members	2	2 new members have joined the group. The group has also linked up with the Councils arts development officer and has performed at local community events at Cutteslowe & Wolvercote	£0
Cutteslowe Community Association	£462	Funding was awarded to contribute towards the delivery of the Cutteslowe allotment club	57	42 children and 15 additional family members have been involved with this project. The children have learnt how to grow and cook vegetables. They also learnt how to plan and design their own allotment.	£210

APPENDIX 1

Grants to Community & Voluntary Organisations / Groups

Small Grants awarded in 2014 / 2015

organisation/project	Grant Awarded (£)	Description of project	Number of people who benefited	Achievements	Other funding received for this project (£)
HUBBUB	£1,000	Funding was awarded to contribute towards the community engagement element of this campaign to raise awareness of food waste around Pancake Day	301	3,740 people used the Flippin' Food Waste website resources of which 301 were recorded from Oxford. The campaign circulated 50 food waste reducing recipes	£5,000
Totals	**£14,671**		**16,205**		**£48,068**

APPENDIX 1
Commissioned Arts Organisations in 2014 / 2015

Council Priority -Strong, Active communities

Commissioned arts partner	Grant Awarded (£)	Description of work area	Total number of Beneficiaries (attendances/participation at events & activities)	Key Outcomes Achieved	Other funding levered in for these organisations (£)
Fusion	28,128	This organisation fosters and promotes the improvement and development of artistic knowledge, understanding and appreciation of the arts for the benefit of the public and in particular community groups, young people, old people and people with special needs.. They aim to deliver inclusive projects with outcomes that bring people together in established cultural venues and events.	3,309	**Developing centre-based and off site activities exploring new art forms to benefit the local community** included a wide range of artistic events, short courses and one off bookings as well as 9 on going regular creative classes offering a varied programme. Fusion have also had 13 one off bookings from artistic groups and ran 8 projects that delivered 76 sessions throughout the year.	31,583
Modern Art Oxford	70,000	This organisation, located in Pembroke Street, was established to promote modern visual arts to the public. Working with artists they deliver a community & education programme aiming to increase the enjoyment and understanding of contemporary art. This funding is used to pay rent charges to Oxford City Council .	52,804	**Community** The Gallery hosts education open evenings; weekly life drawing classes; regular exhibition talks and tours for students and groups; an Artist Teacher Scheme with Oxford Brookes University; an exhibition of work by Ruskin School students; and residency programmes. Funding from Oxford City Council helped MAO secure £850,000 from the Arts Council.	1,392,543

APPENDIX 1
Commissioned Arts Organisations in 2014 / 2015

Council Priority -Strong, Active communities

Commissioned arts partner	Grant Awarded (£)	Description of work area	Total number of Beneficiaries (attendances/participation at events & activities)	Key Outcomes Achieved	Other funding levered in for these organisations (£)
Oxford Contemporary Music (OCM)	10,000	A project working with artists and musicians to promote high quality new music to the public through the delivery of community focused projects . Core funded by the Arts Council and any funding awarded will be used to lever in other sources of funding.	4,899	**Supporting Emerging & Local Artists** OCM delivered 56 live events in Oxford in 2014/15, 7 of the events were programme with more of a family audience in mind. OCM programmed 4 free events / installations for Christmas Light Festival, all strategically placed to help animate the city and provide a cultural route from venue to venue during the festival. **Advice, training opportunities & Education Outreach** OCM provided student work placements to 6 Oxford Brookes music undergraduates, they gained experience in marketing, press, production, general arts administration & event management. OCM developed and piloted an Arts Award Discover programme with Bayards Hill School and 29 young people achieved their Arts Award Discover through the pilot programme.	153,129
Film Oxford	25,000	A project making film and digital media more accessible, delivering training to increase opportunities for individuals into this industry. Funding is used to deliver this work (including £5k to pay rent due to Oxford City Council).	2,276	392 people benefited from subsidised training last year on 53 courses. 42 places were free to those on benefits, 24 people were from a minority group, 28 people had a disability and 27 people were over 55.	135,293

APPENDIX 1
Commissioned Arts Organisations in 2014 / 2015

Council Priority -Strong, Active communities

Commissioned arts partner	Grant Awarded (£)	Description of work area	Total number of Beneficiaries (attendances/participation at events & activities)	Key Outcomes Achieved	Other funding levered in for these organisations (£)
Ark T Centre	5,000	The Ark T Centre delivers art exhibitions, creative workshops, dance and music. There's a recording studio for young musicians, rehearsal space for theatre and dance, a performance and concert area and studios for a group of resident artists. Funding was awarded to • develop a fundraising strategy to secure partnerships and sustainable regular giving. • Engage with Christmas Light Night and other Council events • Use City Council funding to lever in additional funding/sponsorship, grants and donations	n/k	Fund raising strategy developed and music project has secured funding until October 2015 • Submitted an application to be included in County Councils approved partner list • Studio is hired out on weekly basis • Music project has delivered a 6 week course with Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator led group at Cherwell School, Oxford Spires Academy and St Gregory's. • Ark T artists and music workers have delivered 10 sessions of 'Music in Memories' at Frys Court and Alice & Margaret Court • funding secured for a training programme for volunteers to have the opportunity to achieve an AQA	113,978

APPENDIX 1
Commissioned Arts Organisations in 2014 / 2015

Council Priority -Strong, Active communities

Commissioned arts partner	Grant Awarded (£)	Description of work area	Total number of Beneficiaries (attendances/participation at events & activities)	Key Outcomes Achieved	Other funding levered in for these organisations (£)
Oxford Playhouse (OP)	24,000	An organisation aiming to raise public awareness and appreciation of the arts through theatre, dance and music. . Delivering a range of participatory opportunities for the community including youth theatre, access performances for people who are hard of hearing, deaf, blind and partially sighted, support for local artists and family friendly initiatives.	13,455	In 2014/15 a group of 8 young girls from Barton worked with a dance practitioner they attended 10 one hour dance sessions and a short dance piece was filmed and shown in the foyer and circle bars. In the period April - Sep[t 2014 they issued 219 free and 125 discounted tickets. During this period there were 164 family friendly performances with audiences of 4330, 10 Hey Diddle Diddle sessions for 132 pre school children and their families, Playhouse Plays Out Pop Up Tent programme is a successful tool for generating a wider engagement with the arts as it has attracted a broader range of people from traditionally under represented areas, ethnicities and socio economic backgrounds. The tent visited 23 separate events and locations for a total of 29 days, with 51 free performances over 6 weeks.	417,650
Experience Oxfordshire	4,000	Our funding focuses on supporting marketing of cultural organisations and key city events to a tourist audience	n/k	City events and cultural organisations are promoted through Experience Oxfordshire Destination Guide, 30,000 copies were printed last year.	497,000

APPENDIX 1
Commissioned Arts Organisations in 2014 / 2015

Council Priority -Strong, Active communities

Commissioned arts partner	Grant Awarded (£)	Description of work area	Total number of Beneficiaries (attendances/participation at events & activities)	Key Outcomes Achieved	Other funding levered in for these organisations (£)
Arts at the Old Fire Station	32,134	Launched in 2011, Arts at the Old Fire Station is a charity and social enterprise offering support for emerging artists and a gallery with a wide range of exhibitions, a theatre offering music and drama, a studio for all kinds of dance and workshops for artists	48,000	During 2014/15 51 emerging artists exhibited in the gallery this included 19 people from Crisis Skylight. 14 dance teachers offered 29 regular dance classes. 158 performances for the public 48 complementary tickets provided to Crisis Skylight members Subsidised studio, theatre and office space was offered to 29 art students.	470,000
Pegasus Theatre	25,000	An organisation promoting the appreciation of the arts in particular for the benefit of children and young people. Strong reputation, good partnership working and good track record delivering high quality accessible arts. Delivers projects with children and young people targeting socially excluded groups	15,590	Schools and community groups from Cutteslowe Primary school, Littlemore hub, Rose Hill primary school, Leys CDI, Leys Children's Centre, Rose Hill junior youth club & Bayards Hill School all attended shows at Pegasus Theatre last year. Outreach Arts projects took place in Cutteslowe Community Centre, the Dovecote Centre at Blackbird Leys, John Henry Newman School, Barton, Bayards Hill School, Parasol project, Rose Hill junior youth club and Littemore hub. 9 work placements, 11 work experience and 6 young people at risk of or excluded from school have taken par in bespoke alternative educating provision at Pegasus Theatre.	349,064

APPENDIX 1
Commissioned Arts Organisations in 2014 / 2015

Council Priority -Strong, Active communities

Commissioned arts partner	Grant Awarded (£)	Description of work area	Total number of Beneficiaries (attendances/participation at events & activities)	Key Outcomes Achieved	Other funding levered in for these organisations (£)
OVADA	5,000	OVADA provide opportunities for artists to create new work, support the transfer of skills, knowledge & experience, exhibit work and build new audiences for contemporary art. OVADA has strong links to local schools and to further and higher education providers in Oxford and have developed a workshop programme with OCVC. OVADA deliver the "The Warehouse Art School", a one year continuing practice course aimed at artists wishing to professionalise their practice at any stage of their career. Skills development for both young people and emerging artists is combined with a focus on	n/k	OVADA has provided exhibiting / curating opportunities for students and young emerging artists including two student exhibitions as part of Arts weeks 2014. Affordable studio spaces are available at the same rates as previous year. OVADA selected and contributed digital video work on behalf of the Council for the inaugural Low Carbon Oxford Week launch event.	0

APPENDIX 1
Commissioned Arts Organisations in 2014 / 2015

Council Priority -Strong, Active communities

Commissioned arts partner	Grant Awarded (£)	Description of work area	Total number of Beneficiaries (attendances/participation at events & activities)	Key Outcomes Achieved	Other funding levered in for these organisations (£)
Oxford International Links (OIL)	6,000	An umbrella organisation co-ordinating twinning links and events throughout the year. Good partnership working and brings a lot into the city in both funding and culture. Funding has contributed to the delivery of this work.	150	**The Mesh Event** 150 young people from Grenoble, Bonn, Leiden and Perm –who worked with young people from many other European cities, including Oxford. The aim for *Mesh* 2014 was to celebrate the Cultural Diversity that *Mesh* represents by linking to UNESCO's Universal Declaration - "The cultural wealth of the world is its diversity in dialogue" Each group brought its own drama to share and also joined in the creation of an extremely effective performance of Beowulf, which was taken to the streets of Oxford to raise awareness and was seen by a huge crowd in Bonn Square and the surrounding streets. Publicity materials were handed out and very valuable promotion for twinning was gained in a 20 minute interview given by some of the participants on radio Oxford. Daily performances at Pegasus Theatre and the final performance in the Town Hall drew large crowds.	0
Culture team	21,000	This funding enabled the culture team to deliver the culture fund, CREATE and the Culture forums	n/a	14 art organisations and artists received funding from initiatives developed through this fund. It enabled individual art organisations and artists to lever in additional funding from other sources.	104,007

al amount awarded **255,262** **Total number of beneficiaries** **140,483** **Total amount of funding levered in** **3,664,247**

ARTS & CULTURE
The £21,000 vired into the Culture teams budget enabled the following to take place

• Awarded 14 grants of £200-£2,000, to individual artists and organisations across the city for projects ranging from community dance and theatre.
• This funding enabled individual artists and organisations to leverage in funding from other sources.
• It also supported the following Cultural Development initiatives

o CREATE: This micro funding event has successfully brought artists and organisations together from across the city to support each other and raise funding for small scale projects in their communities.
o Culture Forums to develop artist's entrepreneurial skills, with an initial focus on fundraising and invited speakers such as the Arts Council England. www.oxford.gov.uk/cultureforums

Art form	Applicant	Project	Amount awarded	Activity details	Amount of funding levered in for this project
Theatre	PEGASUS THEATRE	Mesh 2014	£1,000	Mesh took place in venues across Oxford in July 2014– Oxford Youth Arts International is a multi-lateral youth arts exchange hosted by Pegasus Theatre Trust Oxford, UK. The theme of the project was linked to UNESCO's Universal Declaration on Cultural Diversity and summarised by the statement - "The cultural wealth of the world is its diversity in dialogue". A celebration of young people of literature and stories from cultures around the world, including their own cultures, through performance and debate, enabling young people to respect and value cultural diversity and tradition by considering how stories in all cultures can be a means of survival both culturally and literally.	£67,563
Mixed art forms	PLAYGROUND	Playground	£900	Playground is an artist-led platform which encourages the development and presentation of new work and ideas while introducing a space for meeting up, networking and collaboration between artists and art-related professionals in Oxford and its surroundings. Playground has more than doubled its reach as well as its numbers both in person and online. The grant will be used to sustain and expand even more of the current activities of Playground and to further engage the diverse arts community of Oxford.	£2,775
Contemporary Arts Research	CARU	CARU	£500	CARU (Contemporary Arts Research Unit) is an Oxford-based collaborative research forum., led by arts researchers and practitioners from an array of disciplines and international backgrounds. Encouraging active debates on art culture as well as offering professional development opportunities. CARU also encourages global networking using virtual platforms, helping artists and researchers from a range of background to connect and collaborate. CARU holds bi-monthly open feedback sessions and open reading groups	£2,075

Dance	EUTON DALEY	Baby Boogie	£1,000	Baby Boogie is a unique, high quality interactive dance-focused events for children under 5 years and their families. The *Baby Boogie* activities are taught / facilitated by a team of professional dance artists and DJ, complimented by a team of young people from the Pegasus Members Committee who will deliver the wrap-around craft activities. *Baby Boogie* is an ideal opportunity to bring communities participating together. Participant feedback from all previous events at Pegasus Theatre evidences that at least 85% of participants are first-time engagers in dance activity. The event has proved extremely effective in developing a new audience for dance.	£4,895
Digital	JONATHAN WESTON	Digital Voices	£700	Digital Voices is a multidisciplinary project exploring the evolution of social media and the impact social media has had on language. Three new artist commissioned performance works will develop on the project's concept. The filmed performance works will be supported by free to take pamphlets containing contextual information on the project, the works with additional artist texts. There were also participatory and live elements such as a live performance and talk in Oxford and an online artist project involving the use of social media activity.	£3,800
Physical Theatre	UNLOCK THE CHAINS COLLECTIVE	Politics of Love	£1,078	To produce a full-length show, *Politics of Love* , at Arts at the Old Fire Station in March 2015 and as part of Dancing' Oxford's Dance Festival 2015. The production is the result of a successful period of R&D, and recent collaborations between Kuumba Nia Arts (Amantha Edmead) and Unlock the Chains Collective (Euton Daley) has prompted the making of it into a full-length piece. The book, a collection of performance poetry from which the stage version will emerge has been completed . The project successfully received Arts Council England funding following the offer of OCC Culture Fund awarded to it.	£12,800
Dance	JUSTICE IN MOTION	Just Motion	£1,000	*Justice in Motion* launched *JUST MOTION* a series of professional dance classes and workshops designed to engage the local community in the company's vision of spreading social justice and awareness through dance and physical theatre. Offering affordable and accessible dance classes at a professional level, a variety of workshops that coincide with the company's overall goals, and free events that connect and inspire local community members to become active change-makers and the bring transformation to this broken world we live in.	£1,800
Dance	EXPRESSION SCHOOL OF DANCE	Illuminating Oxford (as part of CLF 2014)	£770	Illuminating Oxford is a project bringing six primary schools and a community dance organisation together to create a dance performance for the Christmas Light Festival. The project was based on the theme of the festival, 'See your city in a new light', and was designed to add cultural value to the strengthen the festival's community links.	£790

Visual Arts	NICOLAS O'BRIEN	Tandem Festival	£1,000	Tandem Festival put on a winter music and visual arts festival at the OVADA Gallery, 'In Tandem with OVADA'. The event presented pan-European and local artists alongside community groups, workshops and talks around environmental issues and ideas. Acoustic performance spaces brought the audience closer to the music, enabling the rediscovery of sound without large amplification. Visual art was central to the event as musicians were invited to collaborate with a commissioned visual artist to develop an immersive and interactive performance space. The event served as a medium to inform and teach about key environmental issues such as food waste, recycling, climate change, and energy production and consumption.	£4,100
Street theatre	AMY HAILWOOD	Faraway, So Close	£1,349	Faraway, So Close is a physical theatre piece that explores the issues surrounding the Palestine/Israel conflict and its relationship to Britain. It was performed at the Old Fire Station on the 5th and 6th of December. Funding for the show itself has already been provided through Arts Council England, and other organisations. Funding from the Culture Fund provided three post-show workshops leading to the development and performance of a 15-20 minute street theatre piece in support of peace from within Oxford's diverse faith and non-faith communities.	£1,620
Creative arts	CREATEARTS	Arts Adventures	£1,000	Arts Adventures delivered nine workshops at the JR Hospital, Helen House Children's Hospice and Viking House Respite Centre in Spring 2015. Developed in consultation with staff and participants, CREATE carefully selected professional musicians and other artists to develop a creative programme for the participants. The workshops were carefully tailored to engage the children, their families and staff within their own environments. The artists took the children on journeys using interactive games and music, transporting them to exotic places to meet unusual people and truly engage with their imaginations.	£1,789
Theatre	FLINTLOCK THEATRE	Don Q	£455	Flintlock Theatre delivered a new show Don Q at Arts at the Old Fire Station in October 2014.	n/k
Theatre	UNDERCONSTRUCTION	The Story Tailors	£567	Interactive community theatre - access to the Story Tailors was free for people from regeneration areas of the city	n/k
n/a	CREATE DEMENTIA ARTS NETWORK	n/a	£560	With this funding Create Dementia Arts Network were able to offer free conference places for artists involved or interested in working with people with dementia.	n/k
		Totals	**£11,879**		**£104,007**

APPENDIX 1

Commissioning Homelessness 2014 / 2015

All services and projects funded through the homelessness commissioning programme worked within the following principles :

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

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

organisation/project	Grant Awarded (£)	Description of project	Number of Beneficiaries	Achievements	Other funding received for this project (£)
Aspire	£84,517.50	Aspire is a Social Enterprise with charitable status. It primarily works to facilitate the transition for individuals from homelessness into independent living. This is achieved by working with people in supported accommodation to access paid employment or unpaid work programmes/volunteering. Aspire liaises directly with referring organisations such as the City's hostels and day centres to ensure that housing and employment opportunities proceed in tandem and at an appropriate pace for disadvantaged individuals • Aspire offer training opportunities within their own enterprises which focus on gardening and landscaping, property maintenance and recycling. They also offer employment and training opportunities with external companies and organisation with whom Aspire hold work contracts • Aspire is working towards becoming a self-sufficient social enterprise and Oxford City Council has therefore reduced their grant over the last two years. The organisation is progressing well towards self-sufficiency and will see a further reduction to their grant in 2015/16	230	Aspire worked with 230 individuals last year, • 93% of these people abstained from drink & drugs whilst engaging with Aspire, • 28 people secured full time work and were off all out of work benefits, • 15 secured part time employment, • 9,701 working days were generated by Aspires enterprises & projects • 2,041 paid working days were generated by Aspire	£215,483
Elmore Community Services	£40,757.00	The Elmore Team provides practical help, emotional support, advocacy and outreach for people who have complex needs and who are not picked up through other services. The service also provides training for colleagues in the health and social services network. The grant from Oxford City Council funds a tenancy sustainment service on an outreach or appointment basis for single clients over the age of 16 who live in Oxford city. Priority is given to Oxford City Council tenants and where there is capacity can also extend to Home Choice properties and the wider private rented sector.	88	The team worked with 88 clients in 2014/15. The following statistics relate to individuals supported by Elmore in relation to this contract who maintained their tenancies, therefore avoiding homelessness • All clients supported through this contact were in receipt of out-of-work benefits • No clients supported though this service were evicted or abandoned their property • 4 clients' cases were closed as their tenancy was no longer under threat	£660,443
Emmaus Oxford Furniture Store	£25,000.00	Emmaus Oxford is a charity that provides accommodation and work for formerly homeless individuals and also runs a social enterprise which recycles donated furniture and other household goods. Companions live at Emmaus and work 35 hours per week, usually at the store and receive a small allowance from Emmaus. All essential bills are covered by Emmaus and Companions are not in receipt of Job Seeker's Allowance/Income Support. £5,000 of grant assistance pays for the rent that Oxford City Council charges for the store premises	31	The average length of stay of people was 39 weeks • of the 31 people they supported last year 9 people left during the year of which 4 moved on in a planned way • The total amount of revenue made from the furniture store was £287,945 • The Emmaus super store is due to move to new premises on Barns Road in December 2015. • Emmaus strives to be a self-sufficient organisation and grant funding will be tapered accordingly.	£469,900

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Commissioning Homelessness 2014 / 2015

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- Review anti-begging campaign and message and support organisations who work to get people off the streets

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

organisation/project	Grant Awarded (£)	Description of project	Number of Beneficiaries	Achievements	Other funding received for this project (£)
Oxford Homeless Pathways	£133,432.00	Formerly known as Oxford Night Shelter, O'Hanlon House is a 56 bed hostel for single homeless adults. In addition to the accommodation the hostel provides a Day Service, which provides meals, a wet room and a range of meaningful activities. O'Hanlon House also houses the No Second Night Out (NSNO) assessment centre. Referrals are prioritised by Oxford City Outreach and managed by the NSNO team, who are based at O'Hanlon House. Since the introduction of NSNO in 2012, O'Hanlon House is no longer a direct access hostel.	182	56 beds regularly occupied each night, not always by the same people. During the year 182 clients who moved on from O'Hanlon House 129 were supported to move on in a planned way.	£2,616,568
One Foot Forward	£52,496.38	One Foot Forward is a 20 bed young person's hostel offering first-stage accommodation to individuals aged between 16 - 25 years old. This core service is jointly funded with Oxfordshire County Council. Oxford City Council also funds a Young Persons' Referrals and Reconnection Worker who works in One Foot Forward As well as accommodation, the hostel also offers a day service where young homeless individuals can develop their life skills. Structured activities focus on sustainable living, food, information and support. The project also provides a base from which resettlement work may be undertaken.	71	On average this project worked with 37 young people each quarter and over the 12 month period they supported 71 individuals. This service has been re-commissioned by Oxfordshire County Council and One Foot Forward was de-commissioned from 1st April 2015.	n/k
The Gatehouse	£5,580.00	This organisation provides an open access drop-in centre for homeless and socially excluded persons, over 25 years of age.	48	The Organisation provides sandwiches, cakes and soups, as well as hot and cold drinks, as appropriate, and fruit where possible. They also offer art and literature nights	£112,710
Sanctuary Scheme	£30,000.00	The aim of the Sanctuary Scheme is to reduce the number of people who present to Oxford City Council as homeless due to threats of violence made against them. The scheme helps victims stay in their homes by installing new or improved security features such as a new door, lighting, fencing, locks and bolts. The scheme is managed within Oxford City Council's Environmental Protection Service	139 (households)	In 2014/15, the Sanctuary Scheme helped 139 households to remain in their homes and not present as homeless to Oxford City Council	n/a
Pre Tenancy Training Scheme	£15,496.12	Connection Floating Support delivers a pre-tenancy training scheme to individuals as part of a preparation for individuals to live independently and sustain tenancies. The course is personalised and can be completed in the individual's home. It covers elements such as understanding the rights and responsibilities of tenants, how to prepare to view a property, how to manage money, pay bills and other costs	1	A total of 129 referrals were made to the course in the period 1st May 2014 to 31st March 2015. This is not compulsory and although 129 people were referred for this training only one person has completed the course	n/a

APPENDIX 1

Commissioning Homelessness 2014 / 2015

All services and projects funded through the homelessness commissioning programme worked within the following principles :

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

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

organisation/project	Grant Awarded (£)	Description of project	Number of Beneficiaries	Achievements	Other funding received for this project (£)
The Porch Steppin' Stones Centre	£55,000.00	Steppin' Stone is a Day centre for single homeless and socially excluded individuals over the age of 18 and being a resident of Oxford. The centre is open six days per week and offers a number of different activities including: allotment scheme, access to computers, outings, complementary medicine, sports, arts and crafts, books and quizzes. The centre also offers laundry and shower facilities, a clothing store and counselling. Lunch and dinner is offered at a small cost. Workshops and training in life-skills are also offered and Steppin' Stone sign-post clients to other agencies, such as Aspire and Crisis, in order for clients to access employment and training opportunities	177	During the year 177 individuals used the centre. • 61 individuals were supported to obtain paid or voluntary work • With support from the centre 46 individual sustained or improved their housing situation	£150,713
Total	**£442,279.00**	**Total number of beneficiaries**	**828** **plus 139 households**	**Total**	**£4,225,817**

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

APPENDIX 1
Commissioning Community Safety 2014/2015

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

organisation/project	Grant Awarded (£)	Description of project	Number of Beneficiaries	Achievements	Other funding received for this project (£)
A2 Dominion Group	35,082	A project providing practical and emotional support for females and males experiencing domestic abuse. They work to improve the quality of life for females, males and any children by working in a holistic approach to support and using family intervention. The funding was awarded to cover the cost of 1 FTE domestic violence outreach worker plus their support costs for the post	155	This post holder worked in partnership with both statutory & voluntary agencies to support & empower 59 adults (women) & 96 children affected by domestic abuse. All clients received practical and emotional 1 to 1 support, the length of time this support lasts ranged from 1 contact to 13 months so support. 2 clients identified themselves with a disability.	n/a
Children's Society in Oxford	8,000	The project delivers a range of services supporting new migrant and refugee children and their families. The children and young people they are working with are from societies that are vastly different from the UK and get mixed messages from adults, other young people and their own observations around sexual behaviour. Funding was awarded for 1 part time post to support these children and young people to better understand our society, its law and rules around what is appropriate and what is not. This includes appropriate behaviour with girls, Internet safety and protection, stay safe, make safe choices and keep other young people safe.	52	The project worker targeted 16-19 year old young refugees and migrants who are attending ESOL courses at OCVC. Approx. 40% of the young people on this course (split between three classes: Entry 1, Entry 2 and Entry 3) are unaccompanied asylum seeking young people and the rest come from refugee and new migrant communities. Vulnerability among this group of young people is very high due to on-going asylum immigration processes, isolation, difficulties integrating into a new culture, trauma and high risk of getting exploited and getting involved in crimes	19,910
Oxford Sexual Abuse and Rape Crisis Centre (OSARCC)	15,000	A telephone helpline service which is run by a team of trained volunteers. Enabling victims of sexual violence to deal with the effects of these crimes in their lives and improve access to information. The helpline is open 4 times a week and is the only agency providing specialist services for survivors of sexual abuse and rape. They are developing their service to include an Independent Sexual Violence Advisor and therapeutic counselling. Funding was awarded to contribute to the core running costs for this work	354	The telephone helpline listening service is the frontline service. The current level of service (4 session a week) has been maintained since November 2008. In 2014-15 OSARCC ran 199 telephone listening service sessions, 497.5 hours of telephone support was available to support survivors, their friends and families. In addition OSARCC ran 101 email helpline sessions and 33 peer support group sessions. The total number of service users supported by OSARCC has increased by 106% since 2010 from 172 to 354	87,184

Total awarded to Community Safety	**58,082**	**Total number benefiting**	**561**	**Total other funding levered in**	**107,094**

APPENDIX 1
Commissioning CVO Infrastructure 2014 / 2015

Grant Funding Awarded under Council Priority - Strong, Active Communities

Organisation/project	Grant Awarded (£)	Objectives
Oxfordshire Community & Voluntary Action (OCVA)	£48,736	**Training, advice and support** delivered to community and voluntary groups to increase their efficiency and effectiveness (targeting community associations and community groups in the regeneration areas of the city. The regeneration areas are Barton, Northway, Wood Farm, The Leys, Rose Hill, Cutteslowe and Littlemore)
		Build community & voluntary groups capacity by providing funding support and increase the amount of external funding accessed by community and voluntary groups in Oxford particularly in the regeneration areas.
		Enable the 'voice' of the community and voluntary sector in Oxford to be strengthened and increase the number of voluntary and community groups involved in partnerships and forums.
		Work with volunteer involving organisations in Oxford to help them to get better at promoting their work and local residents to have access to volunteering opportunities

Support the development of Community & Voluntary Organisation's

2014-15 Targets	Achievements
1-1 support for 30 groups City-wide. Support includes funding advice, business planning, constitutions and legal structure, policies including health & safety, risk assessment, insurance, HR & employment good practice and the law. .	A total of 51 Oxford voluntary and community groups received support and advice

Commissioning CVO Infrastructure 2014 / 2015

Grant Funding Awarded under Council Priority - Strong, Active Communities

£100,000 raised by community & voluntary organisations in Oxford as a result of support from OCVA	A total of £736,390 was secured by Oxford groups supported by OCVA in 2014-15
Co-ordinate and deliver funding fair in a local area of the City	Funding fair took place on 21.10.14 at Blackbird Leys, 43 people attended representing 37 Oxford based community & voluntary groups.
Resource centre kept up to date and information to include volunteering.	completed and on going
A total of 50 up to date and high quality fact sheets and FAQs available on OCVA website, including 20 on volunteering.	framework for comprehensive suite of fact sheets now developed and first set of new fact sheets on website - on going.
On line guide to Funding Opportunities in Oxfordshire & annual satisfaction survey	visitors to OCVA website can download details of funding opportunities across the county
Maintain on line directories and resources including directory of premises and directory of support services.	completed and on going

Commissioning CVO Infrastructure 2014 / 2015

Grant Funding Awarded under Council Priority - Strong, Active Communities

Total amount of other funding (£)
£419,355

APPENDIX 1
Commissioning Specialist Play 2014 / 2015

organisation/project	Grant Awarded (£)	Description of project	other funding (£)
Parasol	£15,000	Parasol provided inclusive play, social & recreational opportunities for disabled children and young people, supporting them to access mainstream play & leisure activities with their non disabled peers.	£170,546

2014-2015 - Targets	Achievements
Work with at least 60 disabled children (5-12 years) over the year	In the year (2014/15) Parasol supported 118 children aged 5-12 years old (82 disabled and 36 non disabled at play schemes across the city.
Work with at least 30 disabled teenagers (13 - 19years) over the year	During the year (2014/15) Parasol supported 204 young people aged 13-19 years old (110 disabled & 94 non disabled).
To provide specialist support to play providers in Oxford City to enable disabled children & young people to take part in activities over the course of the year	Parasol supported children at Tower Playbase in Northway, Dovecote in Blackbird Leys & SOAP in South Oxford

Parasol had a pool of 42 individual workers 'enablers' available for work during the year. Some were employed for the full Summer holiday period but generally they are employed for at least 1 day.

12 staff received disability equality training and 20 staff received epilepsy training

2 x 2 night camping residential ran with 12 young people of which 6 were disabled.

1 x 4 night residential to Kilvrough Manor in Wales took place with 30 young people in total of which 20 were disabled

48 choice days ran over the year, this involved 8 staff per day (2304 staff hours) and resulted in 3985 young people hours

Dance group - 36 x 2 hour sessions took place over the year which resulted in a Christmas show for parents and 1 show at Pegasus Theatre, these sessions involved 5 staff per session and resulted in 142 disabled young people hours.

APPENDIX 1

Commissioning Advice Centres 2014 / 2015

ADVICE CENTRE MONITORING

		Rose Hill and Donnington Advice Centre	Agnes Smith/BBL Neighbourhood Support Scheme	Oxford Community Work Agency	Oxford CAB
Oxford City Council funding		£90,478	£85,290	£122,611	£200,000
Additional funding from Oxfordshire County Council		£14,360	£14,684	£119,000	£24,000
other additional funding eg fundraising, donations, grants		£14,660	£53,454	£121,035	£314,412
Number of clients :	New	506	836	446	n/k
	On-going	1,766	221	230	n/k
	total	**2,272**	**1,057**	**676**	**6,393**
Total number of contacts	includes telephone, face to face, casework, appointments, signposting and consultancy (clients are counted more than once)	3,584	1,697	9,457	16,516
Gender:	Male	911	386	331	3,115
	Female	1,325	660	345	3,229
	not recorded	36	11	0	48
Age:	under 16	4	7	9	0
	17-24	91	78	34	424
	25-34	1915 - breakdown not consistent with shown	177	89	5723 - breakdown requested not available so added together
	35-49		250	243	
	50-64		245	271	
	65+	212	80	30	
	not stated	0	220	0	175
Ethnicity:	White	1,622	599	466	4,566
	Black	202	106	67	597

		Rose Hill and Donnington Advice Centre	Agnes Smith/BBL Neighbourhood Support Scheme	Oxford Community Work Agency	Oxford CAB
	Asian	265	38	68	564
	Chinese or other ethnic group	17	1	1	54
	Mixed race	3	21	57	320
	Eastern European	0	2	0	0
	Other	100	11	14	282
	Not stated	23	268	3	297
Disability or long term sick		1,344	307	490	1790
Type of visit/ contact:	Out Reach / out of office	20	255	0	0
	Court Visits	23	0	115	0
	Home Visits	16	1	21	47
	In house / office	2,596	1,441	540	6,346
Issues / categories: presented by client					
Benefits	Social care /means tested	83	n/k	1,606	13
	Tax Credits	202	69	401	522
	DLA, AA, Carers Allowance,PIP	221	157	1,717	1,400
	Incapacity Benefit / ESA	47	78	0	803
	Pensions		20	15	240
	Child Support / Child Benefit	44	86	0	0
	Income allowances (eg Job Seekers Allowance, income support)	48	27	0	0
	other	652	0	146	2070
Debt	Priority debt (rent, mortgage, council tax)	445	245	304	1,425
	Non priority debt (catalogues etc)	454	375	187	2,985
	Other (family, friends etc)	59	91	196	0
Housing	Conditions	34	n/k	0	0
	Homelessness/threatened homelessness	70	37	6	271
	Environmental/neighbour issues	9	3	0	70

		Rose Hill and Donnington Advice Centre	Agnes Smith/BBL Neighbourhood Support Scheme	Oxford Community Work Agency	Oxford CAB
	Housing costs (excluding housing debts)	4	n/k	0	0
	Other housing issues	66	102	11	0
Other	Charities	622	98	0	411
	Community care	5	5	8	42
	Consumer & general contract	2	12	0	344
	Crime	10	10	0	0
	Education	13	2	0	126
	Employment	29	72	0	1,383
	Family	23	87	3	0
	Health	56	n/k	0	227
	Immigration / Nationality	3	5	0	481
	Legal	45	22	0	611
	Mental Health	14	n/k	0	0
	Relationship	1	n/k	0	788
	Other	969	65	18	0
Representations	Court Representations - number of clients	16	n/a	0	0
	Appeals Representation - number of clients	10	n/a	66	25
	Informal Repayment Plans - number of clients	5	n/a	138	0
	Other (DRO's bankruptcy)	10	n/a	0	279
Money Gained					
Benefit take-up (projected for current period),		£96,508.64	£248,909.56	£1,694,663.44	£1,500,000.00
Total client debt dealt with for period		£179,419.93	£1,819,968.51	£532,887.76	£5,900,000.00
Debt written off		£131,216.18	£571,486.62	£95,247.64	£104,000.00

		Rose Hill and Donnington Advice Centre	Agnes Smith/BBL Neighbourhood Support Scheme	Oxford Community Work Agency	Oxford CAB
One off payments gained for clients (charities etc)		£20,213.19	£32,454.27	£2,500.00	£29,000.00
Community Care Grants		£0.00	£0.00	£3,085.85	£0.00

APPENDIX 1

Commissioning Money Management / Advice 2014 / 2015

Grant Funding Awarded under Council Priority - Strong, Active Communities

organisation/project	Grant Awarded (£)	Description of project	Number of members	Achievements	Other funding received for this project (£)
Oxford Credit Union	20,000	A financial co-operative run by its members providing a saving service and affordable loans	1025	The organisation continues to work towards becoming self sustaining, however last year they had a lot of bad debt from small loans given to new members. The introduction of debit cards was a success which has helped reduce foot fall to the office. Website updated and more information available, there is also the opportunity to open an account on line. They continue to work with Blackbird Leys Credit Union with the intension to amalgamate both services.	n/k
Total amount awarded	**£20,000**	**Total number of beneficiaries**	**1025**	**Total other funding**	**n/k**

APPENDIX 1
Grants to Community & Voluntary Organisations

2014 / 2015 Youth Ambition

Grants Awarded under Council Priority - Strong & Active Communities

organisation/project	Grant Awarded (£)	Description of project	Number of people benefiting	Achievements / Outcome	Other funding received for this project (£)
Asylum Welcome	£7,500	Funding was awarded to contribute towards the youth coordinators salary and volunteer expenses for the the 1-2-1 support these young people need	121	In total 121 unaccompanied young asylum seekers and refugees have been supported. This support includes help with homework, CV writing, job and property search.	£30,000
Jericho Community Association	£2,500	Funding awarded to deliver 50 detached youth work session in Jericho targeting young people aged 15 - 18 years old.	29	Outreach under taken prior to the start of the project confirmed that young people perferred to 'hangout' and play football rather than participate in a more structured coaching sessions. At the beginning numbers were high but attendance dropped of and only 24 of the planed 50 sessions were delivered. Therefore after the initial first payment of grant was made and with agreement with the deliverer the second tranche of funding was not paid.	£0
Innovista	£4,500	Funding was awarded to contribute towards the young achievers project, working with young people living in Barton.	22	22 young people from Barton engaged with the young achievers project, 18 of those 22 were regular attendees. As a result of the support given to each of these young people one is now studying music at college as a direct result of his involvement.	£8,741

Barton Community Association	£9,600	Funding was awarded to contribute towards the delivery of activities throughout Summer and Autumn on Barton.	29	One of the activities young people took part in was to explore ways that they can make the most of the space around the Neighbourhood centre and potentially incorporate some garden elements into it. 15 different young people got involved in planting a flower bed Young people have also been involved with playing football and other games. The programme offered support to a small group of boys who recently received ASBO's. They were consistently engaged in diversionary positive activities	£1,300
My Life, Mty Choice	£10,000	Funding was awarded to produce a short film on the life of Connor Sparrowhawk who died while on a short stay in a care home	13	13 disabled young people were involved with the production of this short film. The aim was to give a 'voice' to their concerns and to raise awareness of how some people do not get the support that's needed while in care.	£9,487
City of Oxford Swimming Club	£1,475	Funding was awarded to pay for 5 young people to be trained in Level 1 coaching in swimming	4	4 young people achieved a Level 1 Coaching in swimming	£0
Film Oxford	£2,100	Funding was awarded to contribute towards the making of a short film about being safe by the river.	14	14 young people from the digital youth group that runs from Film Oxford made a short film on safety on the river, the short film has so far been screened in two school assemblies raising awareness of the dangers of being around water.	£11,020
Leys News Ltd	£10,000	Funding was awarded to contribute towards developing a youth section in each of the 7 community newspapers and to recruit young people from the local areas to be trained in community journalism	35	35 young people received community journalism training during the year, one young person (from the Leys) who has Aspergers joined in January and is working through his National Council for Training of Journalist certificate and has made great progress and is now looking towards a career in media and journalism. Leys News arranged a meeting for him with Brookes University to investigate an application for a degree course commencing October 2015.	£0

Northway Community Association	£4,701	Funding was awarded to provide youth sessions in Northway on Monday & Thursday evenings	0	17 young people have benefitted from youth sessions delivered through this project, Unfortunately none have been within the age range for this programme	£2,275
Oxford United Youth & Community Trust	£7,500	Funding was awarded for them to deliver 18 employability workshops and to engage with up to 120 young people with 85% moving into training or employment	0	For various reasons the project has been delayed. Project planning and training has taken place and partners are on board, Currently negotiating how the project is to go forward and delivery will take place later this year.	£0
Donnington Doorstep FC	£10,000	Funding was awarded to contribute towards the costs of delivering their STEP OUT project that works with vulnerable children and young people who are suffering or likely to suffer from sexual exploitation.	30	30 young people have benefited from 1-2-1 support that the STEP OUT project provides. Its a safe supportive and encouraging environment for young people that they can access as and when they need. They are encouraged to stop and look at what is going on in their lives; enable them to 'take stock' and focus on what they like, what they want to change and what is stopping them from doing so; to work with them on increasing self esteem, self worth and develop their confidence	£49,725
Film Oxford	£4,560	Funding was awarded to create an interactive, multi visual environment at the Oxford Ice Rink as part of the 2014 Christmas Lights Celebration	10	10 young people were trained in VJ skills (which is an interative multi visual environment) during the Wednesday afternoons Digital Youth sessions at Film Oxford. They developed their own VJ sets over the months than they went on to perform over 2 nights at the Ice Rink in Oxford as part of the Oxford City Council Christmas Lights (21st + 22nd Nov 2014).	£5,990

Ethnic Minority Business Service (EMBS)	£5,000	Funding has been awarded for the organisation to engage with 20 young people from deprived areas of Oxford with the aim to get 50% of them into employment or further education. 5 should complete the Bronze Duke of Edinburgh Award	29	29 young people from regeneration areas of the city have engaged with the programme. One young person hopes to complete the Volunteering Programme and move on to a nursery nurse qualification, with the hope that her volunteering will give her insight in to the profession	£3,742
Ark T Centre	£2,564	Funding has been awarded for outreach to engage with young homeless people with the aim to enrol them on music focused workshops with the opportunity to gain an Arts Award.	10	A successful pilot, the outreach was completed with 10 young people who are homeless The second stage of this programme is to have them attend sessions in the music studio to write songs and record.	£0
Over & Above the Line	£3,000	Funding was awarded to deliver creative writing workshops for young people aged 15-25 years old living in Blackbird Leys, Barton and Rose Hill.	0	Although 71 children engaged with this programme from 3 schools in regeneration areas of the city they were all under the target age group of the youth ambition programme.	£1,000
total amount awarded	**£85,000**	**total number of beneficiaries**	**346**	**total amount of match funding**	**£123,280**

APPENDIX 1

2014 / 2015 Social Inclusion Fund

Grant Funding Awarded under Council Priority - Strong, Active Communities

organisation/project	Grant Awarded (£)	Description of project	Number of beneficiaries	Achievements	Other funding received for this project (£)
Barton Community Association	£3,500	Funding awarded to contribute towards the cost of providing half term activities for children and young people in February 2015	100	Daily registers logged attendances with over 100 children throughout the week. Average daily attendance was 61 children. It was also noted that parents/guardians / carers also benefitted from this activity knowing that their children were in a safe, happy and active environment	£3,325
Blackbird Leys Credit Union	£7,000	Funding awarded to contribute towards staffing costs for the over the counter and on line services	492	From member and transaction records 492 individuals benefited from the credit union services.	£5,500
Cutteslowe Community Association	£2,918	Funding was awarded to support the Cutteslowe Seniors group in an intergenerational project with children from Cutteslowe Primary School.	30	• 30 vulnerable and frail Seniors have participated in and benefitted from the intergenerational and reminiscence sessions. • The project involved visits to the school classrooms and reciprocal visits to the Cutteslowe Community Centre by the pupils. Teachers confirmed that the sessions generated a 'real interest' from the pupils.	£0

Home Start	£6,500	Funding was awarded to fund a part time Family Support Worker.	22	• 22 families have received support from the Family Support Worker. Broken down this equates to:- • 31 Parents. (Including 1 family where there are additional family members who are deemed carers and 1 family with 2 dads). • 58 Children (Including 1 family with 6 children and 1 family with 8 children)	£1,329
Oxford CAB	£2,500	Funding was awarded to train 10 volunteers to deliver financial capacity sessions in their community.	7	• 7 volunteers were recruited through the job clubs and Welfare Reform Team. They were from Blacbird Leys, Barton & Cowley. • All of them have learnt basic office skills, and have enjoyed the chance to get back into the ethos of a regular working commitment. • They have commented on the benefits of eg dealing face to face with clients, and the confidence this has given them in their own skills. • In one case the volunteer had not had to manage money herself and so the discipline of helping with petty cash was invaluable as an introduction to her own household budgeting.	£2,500

Oxford Polish Association	£1,830	Funding awarded to contribute towards three different projects:- • careers support, • meet the specialists • monthly family activities.	155	• Careers support, 25 people benefited from careers support with CV writing and interviews as a result 7 people found employment or changed career. • Meet the Specialist - 30 people attended three meetings where they had the opportunity to meet and talk with local Police officers, specialist media officers and business networking, • Family Sport Days - up to 100 people from different cultural backgrounds attended and participated in a variety of activities at the family sport days	£575
Oxfordshire Music Service	£6,000	Funding awarded to continue and expand the provision of a Saturday morning music session for children on Blackbird Leys	63	Successfully established and delivered 3 music sessions each week which are regularly attended by 63 children. The group has continued to grow in numbers and popularity and some students have now gone on to higher level ensembles	£850
Oxford Somali Forum	£4,250	Funding awarded to support a variety of activities targeting the Somali community.	13	• A group of 13 women started a sewing course organised by Oxfordshire Skills and Learning. • Courses for the same women (including those from the Sudanese community) in cooking and in embedded ESOL	£0

Rose Hill Junior Youth Club	£5,544	Funding awarded to contribute towards staffing costs for Special Educational Needs (SEN) play workers for the youth club.	90	90 local children have had access to safe, creative and inclusive play activities There has been an enhanced level of support and one to one care for children with SEN, Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder and Autism and other complex needs. • It was also reported that staff are increasingly having to support children who are affected by traumatic events taking place within the home. • They have also seen an increase since October 2014 in the number of safeguarding issues that we are dealing with – because of anti social behaviour outside of the club sessions – which are being carried out by children attending the club	£6,600
St Lukes Church	£2,325	Funding awarded for an art focused project targeting older people in the local area	12	12 local older people attended a series of art based reminiscence workshops.	£0
TRAX-Oxfordshire Motor Pr	£4,949	Funding awarded to provide bicycle maintenance and road safety courses in regeneration areas of the city.	37	• 33 young people benefited from learning new skills on bicycle maintenance and road safety • In addition it created employment for 4 Peer Mentors who delivered the training	£2,214
Total amount awarded	**£47,316**	**Total number of beneficiaries**	**1021**	**Total other funding levered in**	**£22,893**

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APPENDIX 2 - Grant Monitoring Information for 2014-15

Case Study from the Domestic Abuse Outreach Worker
This is a live, relatively new on-going case. Names have been changed.

Background to the referral
A call was made by a head teacher from a local school to helpline who had received disclosures of physical abuse from a father, from a 12 year old child.

The head teacher was seeking some advice and support. Helpline advised the Head Teacher to complete a safeguarding referral to social care immediately.

Helpline called the mother of the child; she also made disclosures of both physical and emotional abuse from her husband, against herself and the children.

Helpline contacted social care and confirmed that case was picked up as urgent. Referral also made for the mother to receive some outreach support.

The domestic abuse outreach worker met with the mother and as this was their introductory meeting, we had a chat about her situation and completed some paperwork and talked about the support, both practical and emotional that the domestic abuse outreach worker could offer.

The mother was very clear that she was scared and undecided about what she wanted to do in real terms. She was very confused and upset with the involvement of social care. She said she welcomed support and wanted her children to be safe but felt judged, blamed and misunderstood in the initial assessment report from social services. The domestic abuse outreach worker took this opportunity to discuss with the mother at some length, the role of social services and how they are there to support her and to support her to make protective decisions for herself and her children.

The domestic abuse outreach worker made it clear to the mother that her role was to support her and to assist in her and her children's safety not to judge or rush her into anything she was not ready to do.

This is a relatively new case; and will involve a lot of partnership working with other agencies to support this family. The mother is clear she wants her children to be safe and recognises that she is in need of support to enable her to do this. However there is a lot of confusion and the mother is very much overwhelmed.

The Child Protection case conference is pending.

Whilst the mother will need a lot of practical help such as referring/ signposting/ advising / providing numbers etc., a *large* part of the domestic abuse outreach workers support with the mother will be emotional, taking the time to listen, unpick situations occurring in her life and talk them through, to support, advice and help with confidence building.

ADVICE CENTRE CASE STUDIES

Debt is an increasing issue that people are seeking help with. Clients looking for help with debt problems continue to increase for all of the Advice Centres. The total of client debt dealt with, by all of the Advice Centres, over the year amounts to £8,432,276. They are all reporting that priority debt (rent, mortgage, council tax etc) is now the biggest problem

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Debt Case Study from Oxford Community Work Agency (OCWA) at Barton

A couple went to OCWA in October 2013. They had been referred to them by Her Majesty's Courts and Tribunal Service.

They are both in their 50s and both had been required to stop working due to health problems. He was left with debilitating symptoms following a brain haemorrhage and she had cerebella ataxia. They are owner occupiers with no mortgage, they have a council tax liability and were struggling to manage their household bills.

When they met us she was in receipt of contributions based Employment Support Allowance (ESA) at the assessment rate of £72.40 and he was in receipt of Disability Living Allowance (DLA) middle rate care component and lower rate mobility at £76.90, total income £149.30 a week.

OCWA were able to advise her to claim Carers Allowance in respect of his care needs and to pursue a claim to means tested ESA.

OCWA also advised on a mandatory revision against a refusal for income related ESA that was refused due to a question of capital. The decision was overturned in their favour as the savings had been used for living expenses prior to them being referred to OCWA.

OCWA advised her to claim Personal Independence Payments (PIP) in October 2013. A decision was made that she was not entitled to this benefit in July 2014. A mandatory revision request was made and in October 2014 the original decision was revised to award her standard rate mobility component but no daily living component.

OCWA appealed against this decision. A tribunal heard this appeal in January 2015 and increased the PIP award to standard rate daily living component and standard rate mobility component from October 2013.

His DLA had been reduced on renewal decision in early 2014 to lower rate care component and this was appealed. The appeal was prepared by OCWA and following a hearing of the appeal in June 2014, middle rate care component and lower rate mobility component was awarded back to April 2014.

Following the award of PIP and DLA a thorough review of the total benefits was undertaken and the income was increased to

- Disability Living Allowance at - £76.90
- Personal Independence Payment at - £76.90
- Employment and Support Allowance at £322.95 - total weekly income £476.75

They are entitled to full Local Council Tax Reduction.

This couple's income was increased by £327.45. This has enabled them to retain their independence, to remain in their home and to manage their care with the additional support of the correctly assessed benefits

This work required two appeals, 2 mandatory revision requests and a specialist knowledge of the benefits system to navigate them through.

Debt Case Study from Oxford Citizens Advice Bureau Money Advice Worker who is based in St Aldates Chambers.

A woman was referred to the money advice worker by Oxford City Council's Rent Team who feared that they would soon have to bring eviction proceedings.

This woman lives on her own in a 3 bedroom council owned accommodation. Her only source of income derived from income based Employment Support Allowance she claimed at the standard rate of £72.40 per week. Due to the two bedroom under-occupancy of the property after her children left home she was subject to a bedroom tax reduction of 25% taken each week from her Housing Benefit. This woman had a significant rent shortfall.

At the time of our interview this woman was not receiving any Discretionary Housing Payments to make up the under-occupancy shortfall.

Due to the unsustainable situation she was in, this woman had rent arrears of £1,764.

In addition to her rent arrears, this woman had a number of priority debts including Council Tax, Child Tax Credit overpayments, gas, electricity and water arrears and significant non-priority debt, including loans she had taken out to help her pay the rent shortfall she could not afford.

As she had already obtained a Debt Relief Order (DRO) in 2010, this woman was not eligible for a DRO.

For an initial outcome the money advice worker assisted this woman in maximising her income by helping her reduce the deductions from her gas and electricity pre-payment meters from £10 per week to £4.00 per week and the worker applied to the Welfare Reform Team to receive Discretionary Housing Payments (DHP). The Welfare Reform Team agreed to assist her with DHP and this covered the bedroom tax shortfall for an initial period. This woman was also advised of ways of mitigating the impact of the bedroom tax, such as by doing approved work and getting lodgers.

The money advice worker also confirmed that this woman's debts were all dated from after the date of the DRO.

To help free up income, the money advice worker assisted this woman in applying to the British Gas Energy Trust and Thames Water's Customer Assistance Fund and both charities agreed to help this woman by writing off her water, gas and electricity debt.

A payment arrangement was also made with:-

- Her rents officer toward repaying the rent arrears,
- HMRC towards repaying the tax credit overpayments and
- Oxford City Council's revenues department in respect of reduced repayments towards the council tax debt.

A token offer payment arrangement was put in place with her non-priority debt owed to Barclaycard.

This woman's circumstances then changed following a failed ATOS medical assessment. (ATOS Healthcare conducts assessments on behalf of the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) for Personal Independence Payment (PIP) claims.)

The money advice worker explained to this woman the process of applying for mandatory reconsideration within a month and of the process of appeal and advised her to apply for Jobseekers' Allowance if she decides not to appeal or in the interim of her mandatory reconsideration being considered.

The money advice worker contacted Oxford City Council and advised them of this woman's change of circumstances and of being on nil income to avoid suspension of benefits.

Following the advice from the money advice worker, this woman also took action herself towards stabilizing her finances by enrolling on a university course and found part time work.

This woman is now studying full time, working 16 -22 hours per week, has found two lodgers to help her with her rent and costs and is no longer dependent on state benefits.

The following are some samples of the type of problems that people have contacted the Oxford Citizens Advice Bureau about in 2014/15.

1. Responsive welfare?
An elderly lady who is 61 years old and is from Pakistan. She suffered a heart attack and has been diagnosed with heart failure. She lives in her son's home and he is married.

This woman had attended a medical assessment in respect of her award of Employment Support Allowance (ESA). The assessment found her fit for work related activity despite the fact that after her heart attack her heart condition deteriorated.

She attended an appointment at Oxford CAB with her son to ask for advice and help. She had already requested a Mandatory Reconsideration.

In brief, the mandatory reconsideration is a process by which the decision you are unhappy with is looked at again, usually by a different decision maker. Once you receive the mandatory reconsideration notice, telling you whether the decision has been changed and, if so how, you can then appeal if you are still unhappy.

Oxford CAB helped her gather evidence to support this, but the DWP did not change their decision, so Oxford CAB helped her start the appeal process.

Oxford CAB attended the appeal with this woman and her son. They won the appeal and this woman and her son are expected to return soon for help to make an application for Personal Independence Payment (PIP).

2. The cost of official error
A man lives on his own in Oxford and says he gets easily confused by letters he gets, and over organising his money. He came to the CAB because he was falling behind with his bills.

There were a number of issues identified, but one thing was particularly puzzling . because this man had fallen behind with one of his utility bills the utility company had asked the DWP to deduct an amount each week from this man's benefits to pay them.

The problem was that the utility company which was supposed to be getting its money directly from this man's benefits, was still chasing him, saying he still hadn't paid his bills. This had gone on for quite some time, and in the middle of last year they had threatened court action.

At first it was assumed that the deduction shown on his benefits correspondence must be for a previous property or another bill. Oxford CAB asked the DWP to check and they said yes, the deduction was for this man utility bill. But when they checked it

turned out that the money being taken from this man's benefits was going to the wrong company. The DWP said they had to investigate this.

By this time, it was almost two years since the deductions had started and nearly £1,000 had been taken from this man benefits and paid to the wrong utility company.

After Oxford CAB complained, the DWP paid this man some compensation and apologised.

This is an unusual example but advisers at Oxford CAB are increasingly faced with the problem of getting answers to quite simple questions about a client's situation because clients are unsure who to contact or are just unable to deal with these types of problems.

3. Samples of Employment problems Oxford CAB are helping clients with
A man was working in a local café. He worked without pay for the first week and was told by the café owner this was because he was being trained. When he did get paid the rate was £5.00 an hour which is below the national minimum wage. This man wasn't given a written confirmation of employment, a contract or payslips.

A woman has been employed locally by a national company as a cleaner and has been trying now for over four months to get them to pay her money she is owed for her wages. Her manager threatened that she would lose her job if she came to see Oxford CAB. In the end this woman resigned – but Oxford CAB is still trying to get her money for her.

A man visited Oxford CAB because his employer tried to underpay him by over £1,000, and claimed to have lost his contract and then, after finally paying up, cut back the hours on his zero hours contract so that he was forced to leave.

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

A couple visited Agnes Smith advice centre because their Housing Benefit had been reduced by the under-occupancy penalty, known as the 'bedroom tax.' They had lived in a three bedroomed house for many years and now that their children had left home and the Housing Benefit regulations had changed, they were under-occupying by two bedrooms, meaning that they had an extra £19 per week rent to pay, where previously they had been entitled to full housing benefit because they were on means tested income benefits. Their housing benefit had been reduced even further by an overpayment, which the clients did not understand, because they had no income for the period in question.

The clients wanted to move to a one-bedroomed property so that they would not have to pay the bedroom tax, but their landlord would not let them exchange or transfer due to their rent arrears. They had accumulated high rent arrears over the years due to ill-health, sporadic work and difficulty with managing their benefit claims.

The clients were also having difficulties with bailiffs enforcing several years of unpaid Council Tax, and had been paying non-priority doorstep lenders at the expense of their rent and Council Tax.

Agnes Smith advice centre advised the clients on priority and non-priority payments and helped draw up a budget to ensure that priority creditors were paid first, to avoid the risk of losing their home or having goods removed by bailiffs. It was clear that even with the use of budgeting there was a shortfall for priority payments, leading to ongoing hardship.

Agnes Smith advice centre contacted Housing Benefit and explained that the clients had had no income for the period of the alleged overpayment, and they cancelled the overpayment, reducing the deductions from the weekly benefit. We looked into options for dealing with the clients debts.

The clients were both eligible for Debt Relief Orders, due to their low income and lack of assets, and we negotiated with their landlord not to enforce the possession order on the property and to allow them to downsize and have a fresh start with no rent arrears and no bedroom tax on the smaller property. The Debt Relief Orders also provided for the write-off of the Council Tax and all non-priority debts. Debt Relief Orders cost clients £90 due to Insolvency Service fees and so the advice centre raised the funds from a local charity.

The clients are now settling into their new one-bedroomed home and are debt-free, and the hardship that they were suffering has been alleviated now that they are free from debt repayments and the bedroom tax.

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APPENDIX 3 - RISK REGISTER - Grant Monitoring Information for 2014-15

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

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

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OXFORD CITY COUNCIL

To: **City Executive Board**

Date: **9 July 2015**

Report of: **Head of Service**

Title of Report: **Adoption of the Statement of Community Involvement in Planning (2015)**

Summary and Recommendations

Purpose of report: To ask members to formally adopt a revised and improved version of the Statement of Community Involvement in Planning following public consultation.

Key decision *Yes*– affects all wards

Executive lead member: Councillor Alex Hollingsworth, Executive Board Member for Planning, Transport and Regulatory Services

Policy Framework: Statements of Community Involvement are part of the legislative framework within which local plan documents are prepared. In addition, the aims and commitments in the Statement of Community Involvement in Planning are consistent with the Council's recently-updated Public Engagement Policy Statement.

Recommendation(s):
It is recommended that the CEB:

- agree to adopt the Statement of Community Involvement in Planning as the Council's formal statement about how it will engage and involve people in planning decisions; and
- Authorise the Head of Planning and Regulatory, in consultation with the Executive Lead Member, to make any necessarily editorial corrections to the Statement of Community Involvement in Planning prior to final publication.

Appendicesto report

Appendix AStatement of Community Involvement in Planning
Appendix BRisk Register
Appendix CPublic Participation Statement
Appendix DAction plan for Community Involvement in Planning
Appendix EExamples ofsupplementary guidance or help sheets
Appendix FExample of procedural guidance about where we will put site notices

Appendix G Review of best practice on theconsultationthat comparable authorities require from developers

Summary

1. The Statement of Community Involvement in Planning (SCIP) details how we will engage local people and organisations in the planning process in Oxford, both in planning policy and development management. A statement of community involvement was first adopted by the Council in 2006 and this version replaces that document, to encourage greater and earlier public engagement, and to bring it up to date with current consultation methods and regulations.

What is the Statement of Community Involvement in Planning

2. As a Local Planning Authority, it is a statutory requirement to have an adopted Statement of Community Involvement covering planning processes. The City Council has additionally published a more general 'Public Engagement Policy Statement' (formerly the 'Consultation Strategy') which covers all Council functions, hence for clarity the document related to planning processes will be referred to as the Statement of Community Involvement in Planning (SCIP). The aims and commitments in the SCIP are consistent with the Council's recently-updated Public Engagement Policy Statement but add extra detail specific to planning processes.

3. The SCIPmust comply with Government policy and legislation about statutory requirements for consultation in planning. In recent years these have been subject to a number of revisions, so the SCIPseeks to avoid re-statingelements of national policy or legislation that will date the document in forthcoming years. It focuses on the Oxford context and where we are exceeding the minimum requirements in favour of best practice (Appendix G sets out comparison of selected authorities' requirements of developers). Similarly the SCIP also steers away from rigidly prescribing consultation techniques, in favour of establishing broad consultation principles that will continue to apply even if there are shifts in the regulatory framework or operational procedures. This also allows for flexibility to tailor consultations to make them appropriate and useful in different circumstances. In these ways, it is intended that the SCIP be adaptable enough to accommodate whatever local plan or development management changes occur in coming years. Additional detail about consultation will be provided through supporting guidance and help sheets.

4. The SCIP sets out not only what the Council is committed to in terms of engaging and involving people in planning decisions; it also establishes how we expect applicantsto carry out engagement related to planning applications, particularly 'major' applications. In both respects, the SCIP sets out a clear process for all parties, in terms of how local communities can be involved in planning decisions for applications and for policy formulation for Oxford.

5. In terms of City Council commitments, the SCIP promotes engagement earlier in the process, particularly in preparing planning policies. It recognises that there is not a single solution for all situations, so rather than rigidly prescribing processes for all policy documents, it introduces a new commitment of producing and publishing (via the City Executive Board) a tailored consultation programme for each local plan document, toreflect the different topics and geographical areas that policy documents can cover. Each programme will be framed by the

principles in the SCIP and will draw upon the different methodologies in the Appendices of the SCIP, as well as best practice. The City Council is also keen to have more of an on-going dialogue with communities, rather than just at specific “consultation” points. The SCIP also highlights the importance of how the City Council communicates the outcomes of consultation on policies and applications.

6. In terms of requirements upon developers, under current legislation the Council cannot *require* applicants or developers to undertake consultation. However theSCIPsets out clearly that the City Council strongly encourages it for major applications. It is the intention that, over time, comprehensive and meaningful engagement in planning decisions will become the norm expected from those seeking to delivery major schemes in the City. Officers will also continue to monitor emerging best practice from other planning authorities(as summarised in Appendix G), including how some of the emerging proposals stand up if tested at appeals or in legal cases because whilst some authorities may appear to have stronger requirements upon applicants, such a position is not necessarily enforceable under current legislation and regulations regarding pre-application consultation.

7. The SCIP introduces a range of measures to this effect:
   - It encourages and reinforces a two-stage pre-application approach, so that developers engage with the community at the outset, make appropriate amendments to the proposal, and then go back to the community to explain how their comments and concerns have been taken into account. This is all prior to an application being submitted to the Council, whilst it is still being formulated, and ideally whilst there is more scope for meaningful engagement with the community rather than just asking views about final options. The City Council will encourage developers to submit their engagement strategy as part of any Planning Performance Agreement, so that the methods can be agreed with the City Council;
   - New help sheets have been prepared alongside the SCIP to provide supplementary guidance about the standards of engagement that we expect and want to see.There is also guidance to encourage and facilitate the community who wish to engage in planning decisions. The help sheets are ‘living’ documents, available on the City Council website, which can be updated easily to keep up to date with emerging best practice in the field. Examples of the help sheets include: guidance about best practice visualisation tools; guidance about how to comment on applications and what is a material consideration; and guidance about the neighbourhood planning process. These will be kept under review, and new topics can be added as required.
   - Whilst the SCIP sets out the principles, it is also important to be clear and transparent about how the City Council is actually going to implement the SCIP in practice. Therefore we have also published operational guidance covering processes such as how and where site notices will be put up.

8. The SCIP also addresses consultation within neighbourhood planning processes. Whilst the preparation of neighbourhood planning documents is led by the relevant neighbourhood forum, the City Council does have a role at certain stages. We have also produced guidance to support the neighbourhood planning groups in achieving meaningful engagement, and to guide local residents about how and when they might look to be involved in the formulation of the plan.

Results of consultation and response to key issues raised

8. The SCIP takes account of comments from the public and other stakeholders about their experiences of engaging with planning processes. Appendix C explains the consultation undertaken, and how the findings have been addressed.

9. In some cases we have made changes to the SCIP in response to comments made, and in other cases there were wider issues that cannot immediately be addressed in the SCIP. Nonetheless where useful points have been made that will help us to improve public engagement in planning decisions, they have been noted and an 'Action Plan' drawn up to set out clearly how we intend to respond to them (Appendix D). For example, the Action Plan for Community Involvement in Planning captures more detailed points about IT system improvements, which cannot be resolved instantly but that we are working through.

10. Where we are *not*proposing to make the changes suggested then we have explained why not, to show that the comments have been fully considered. For example organisations commented that they would like the Oxford Design Review Panel discussion sessions, particularly at pre-application stage, to be made open to the publicso that local people can be involved in discussions with the Panel. We explained how the role of the Panel is different, but does not replace, the views of local residents.

11. There is also a number of other changes that either are in the process of being implemented, or will be made,which complement and support the approaches in the SCIP. These include:
    - Setting out 'standard operating procedures' for officers to follow in key tasks, such as how and where to put up site notices for planning applications, to ensure consistency. These are summarised in the process/operation note (Appendix F);
    - Trialling a City Development electronic-newsletter in 2015;
    - Regularly reviewing and improving the layout and usability of the website, to help people find planning documents more easily, including user testing groups with customers;
    - Changes to the public area at St Aldate's Chambers where the public can view planning documents;
    - Reviewing how comments are addressed in planning committee report recommendations from officers; and
    - Increasing the use of social media to provide information about planning matters.

12. Some of the specific changes made to address consultation responses include: changing the name of the document to differentiate it from the broader Council engagement strategy and clarifying the relationship between the documents; providing more context about the different types of communities; making more explicit how we expect the two-stage pre-application process to work; clarifying language to emphasise the role of meaningful engagement to address concerns that people would not really be involved in decisions; and adding section about what happens in between formal consultations on policy documents, and how we will continue to keep people updated.

13. As well as formal consultation comments to inform the SCIP, the Council has also reflected on previous consultation experiences, from the perspective of the customer and of the Council. Recent policy document consultations and major

applications were reviewed, including the lessons identified in the Roger Dudman Way review. The review of issues also included looking at complaints. The SCIP seeks to build on what has been done well, and to continue implementing improvements.

Next steps

14. Following adoption by the CEB, the SCIP will be applied as City Council policy for all planning processes. There is no independent examination for SCI documents. We will also continue to work through the Action Plan to address and improve other processes which will help to support effective and meaningful engagement. The 'living' help sheets will also be kept under regular review and will be updated as appropriate.

Legal Issues

15. The Council has a legal duty to have an adopted statement of community involvement. The Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 (as amended) requires the City Council to produce an statement of community involvement to set out how the Council intends to achieve community involvement in the preparation of plans and decision making for planning applications.

Financial Issues

16. The package of measures in the revised SCIP aim to put in place changes to service delivery to enable greater resource efficiency, and to deliver greater outcomes and leaner delivery.

17. The cost of implementing the SCIP commitments as proposed can be met within the City Development budget. Any additional consultation approaches over and above those proposed in the SCIP may result in additional financial and resource implications.

Environmental Impact

18. No specific impacts identified

Level of Risk

19. The SCIP does not propose new planning policy or identify new development sites, but considers how best to involve different sectors of the community in plan preparation and in determining planning applications.

20. The update to the SCIP is a key priority for the City Council. Failure to adopt an updated document could present legal risks in the examination of policy documents, and in processing applications. The risk register is attached as Appendix B.

Equalities Impact

21. The SCIP seeks to ensure opportunities for participation in the local planning processes, including fair access for equalities groups. The way that the City Council consults on planning applications and the preparation of local plans could have an impact on equalities groups who may have challenges in accessing information, such as those that do not have English as their first

language or those who are unable to access the internet. City Development will therefore continue its practice of preparing an Equalities Assessment when preparing local plan documents, and ensure that equalities issues are addressed when considering relevant planning applications.

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List of background papers:
None

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OXFORD CITY COUNCIL

Statement of Community Involvement

in planning

June 2015

Building a world class city for everyone

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1. Introduction

1.1 It is an aim of the City Council to improve dialogue and consultation throughout Council processes.

1.2 This is explained in the Corporate Plan 2015-2019, and then over-arching principles and actions are set out in the Community Engagement Policy Statement 2014-2017. The City Council has also produced the Corporate Equality Scheme 2012-2015, which identifies that having fair access to engage in the planning process is a priority for the City Council. These strategies apply to all the City Council's services and are not specific to the planning process.

1.3 There is then an additional legal requirement under the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 (as amended) for the City Council to produce a Statement of Community Involvement (SCI), which sets out how it intends to achieve community involvement in the preparation of plans and in decision-making on planning applications.

1.4 The City Council adopted its first SCI in 2006. Since then there have been a number of changes to the planning system which have produced new requirements and processes for producing local plans and for dealing with planning applications.

1.5 In addition, the City Council is keen to promote earlier public engagement in planning decisions. The City Council continues to keep these processes under review, including commissioning an independent review of planning processes, including consultation processes, through the Roger Dudman Way Review (2013)[1]. The recommendations and lessons learnt about community engagement from these reviews have also helped to shape this Statement of Community Involvement (in Planning) (SCIP).

1.6 The SCIP sets out consultation requirements and guiding principles, with more detailed information provided through supplementary guidance and help sheets that can be updated more easily and frequently via the website. This is so that the SCIP is flexible if there are further changes to the planning regulations or government policies in the next few years, and so that we can adapt processes to reflect best practice.

1.7 The SCIP goes above the minimum statutory requirements for consultation[2] and promotes best practice in the delivery of our planning services.

[1] Roger Dudman Way Review, Main Report and Executive Summary available online: http://mycouncil.oxford.gov.uk/documents/s16562/RDW%20INDEPENDENT%20REVIEW%20FINAL%20REPORT%20140107%2017th%20Jan.pdf

[2] The current minimum requirements for consultation on local development plan documents and supplementary planning documents are set out in The Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012. The minimum requirements for consultation on Planning Applications are set out in the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) Order 2010.

What is the Statement of Community Involvement in Planning?

1.8 Oxford City Council is the local planning authority for Oxford. The SCIP sets out the City Council's approach to involving the community and stakeholders in the production of planning policy documents and planning control decisions in the city.

The Statement of Community Involvement sets out how the City Council will involve the community when preparing planning policy documents and deciding on planning applications.

The Statement of Community Involvement:

- Lets you know how you can get involved in planning decisions;
- Sets out how we will engage the wider community in planning decisions; and
- Sets out the level of community engagement that we expect from developers in the planning process.

In summary, it is about how we inform, involve and consult local people in our planning decisions.

1.9 In preparing the SCIP, consultation has been undertaken to help develop an approach that reflects the needs and aspirations of the community, stakeholders and the City Council.

Oxford's communities

1.10 The 'community' includes all the individuals, groups and organisations that live, work, or operate within Oxford. Communities can take many forms, they can be:

- *Communities of Place* - people living, working or undertaking other activities in geographically distinct areas of the city (such as neighbourhoods or wards).
- *Communities of Identity* - people who share common aspects of their identity (such as ethnicity, religious beliefs, age or gender).
- *Communities of Interest* - people with shared interests (such as allotment holders, cyclists or businesses) or people who use the same services or facilities (such as parks, roads, or community buildings).

1.11 The SCIP also refers to 'stakeholders'. By this we mean individuals or organisations with a direct influence on the subject under discussion, such as landowners or the highways authority. Some of our consultation with stakeholders is also governed by legislation such as the Duty to Cooperate. The SCIP seeks to avoid repeating legislation or statutory requirements, because that is fixed by the government. Instead it focusses on what we are specifically doing locally in Oxford over and above the requirements.

2. Our principles for community involvement in planning decisions

Why is it important to involve the community in the planning process?

2.1 We want to inform and involve the community in planning decision-making processes. Achieving effective community involvement in the planning process can have several benefits, including:

- More focus on the priorities identified by the community;
- Influencing the provision of local services to meet local needs;
- Ability to draw upon a local knowledge base;
- Increased community commitment to the future of an area; and
- Increased support for planning services, as communities will have a better understanding of how planning policies are developed and how decisions are made.

2.2 The City Council's approach to community engagement contributes directly to its ambition to build a world class city for all. Many of Oxford's residents are highly articulate and very skilled at getting their points of view heard and those contributions are always welcome. The City Council also wants to open up more opportunities for people whose voices might not be so easily heard to be involved if they wish to.

Our principles for community involvement in planning decisions

2.3 The commitments in this SCIP are framed by wider City Council strategies about community engagement, as well as being informed by consultation and other feedback.

2.4 The following general principles for community engagement were agreed in the City Council's Community Engagement Policy Statement 2014-2017:

i. Flexibility
ii. Proportionality
iii. Transparency and clarity
iv. Timeliness
v. Feedback
vi. Inclusiveness and accessibility

2.5 In addition we have identified four key principles for effective engagement in planning processes:

1. *Timely and sustained* – events and activities should start before any planning decisions are made and engagement should last throughout the planning process and beyond;
2. *Inclusive for all local people* – those living and working in an area have a right to be involved, all parties are welcome, and process must take account of peoples' varied needs;
3. *Two way, open and responsive* – communication should be discursive not prescriptive, so that information can be debated and ideas exchanged; and
4. *A matter of public record* – the processes must be documented and published.

(Roger Dudman Way Review 2013, paragraph 91)

2.6 The SCIP has also been informed by consultation and reviewing customer feedback. Two of the key themes that came out is that people want to be involved at an early enough stage when decisions and proposals can still be truly influenced, and also to be

kept informed of progress and for us to set out more clearly how consultation has influenced decisions so that people can see how it has followed through the process.

2.7 Therefore a general theme of the SCIP is that consultation should start as early as possible to give everyone the opportunity to participate and influence the development of policies and options for an area. This includes encouraging consultation on major applications at an early stage. This will give communities and stakeholders the chance to put forward their own ideas rather than simply comment once proposals are fixed. The City Council and applicants will then be better placed to understand the issues and needs that are important to the community.

2.8 It also encourages on-going community involvement, with feedback and information on progress and outcomes. Involving communities at an early stage, and continuing that involvement throughout the planning process, will help to resolve issues and achieve consensus where possible, which will in turn avoid the need for lengthy independent examinations. Nonetheless planning decisions are often contentious, and require differing views (including those of the community) to be balanced and judgements made. So the SCIP also promotes transparency of processes and decisions, and clearer communication, so that even if people do not like the outcome of a decision they can at least understand how it has been reached.

2.9 The scale and type of community involvement in planning also needs to be proportionate and appropriate, and reasonable in terms of cost.

Based on these principles, this SCIP seeks to ensure the planning service provides:

The opportunity to contribute ideas – people will have the opportunity to put their ideas forward and the City Council will consider and respond to these suggestions as appropriate;

The opportunity to shape proposals and options – the City Council will provide opportunities for people to actively engage in the planning process at early stages when there is more scope to shape them. The City Council will also encourage applicants/the promoters of development proposals to do the same;

The opportunity to make comments on formal proposals – for more advanced development proposals and planning policy documents, the City Council will meet the Regulatory requirements for community involvement, and where appropriate go beyond the requirements;

The opportunity to receive feedback and be informed about progress and outcomes – the City Council will consider all comments received through consultations on policies, and make appropriate changes accordingly and explain our response. The City Council will then provide updates on the progress of planning policy documents to all those who have submitted comments on the document. This may be by direct contact or by publishing material on the City Council's website (e.g. consultation reports and updates).

The City Council will also explain how comments on planning applications have been taken into consideration in officer's reports. These reports are published on the City Council's website; and

To provide relevant information - when asking for comments, the City Council will be clear about which issues can and cannot be taken into consideration, which issues are already fixed (eg by legislation);

To achieve value for money – ensuring consultation is worthwhile and value for money by balancing cost and time constraints and City Council resources, and ensuring that consultation is appropriate and proportionate to the issues being considered and the communities affected.

We will deliver these principles through:

- Being open and transparent in our decision-making;
- Using plain English as far as possible;
- Ensuring that planning policy documents are clear and concise;
- Using images, maps and illustrations, to make planning policy documents more accessible to a wider range of people;
- Front-loading engagement at the early stages of producing new policies and generating options;
- Encouraging developers to undertake early consultation when preparing planning applications, including before they are submitted as formal applications;
- Promoting electronic methods of communication to increase efficiency (whilst also providing for those who find it difficult to access material online); and
- Promote best practice, and explore new and evolving methods of communication and consultation.

2.10 The rest of this document and appendices explain how these principles will be applied to the preparation of policy documents and consideration of planning applications.

3. Engagement processes for planning policy documents

Which documents will we be consulting on?

3.1 The main planning policy documents that the City Council produces are:

Statement of Community Involvement – this document is itself the subject of public consultation to help develop an approach that reflects the needs and aspirations of the community, stakeholders and the City Council. The consultation requirements set out in this document will need to be met in producing any new local development plan documents or supplementary planning documents.

Local Development Scheme – this sets out the City Council's programme for creating new development plan documents and supplementary planning documents over a three year period, including a description and timetable for each document. The Local Development Scheme is published on the City Council's website.

Local Plan – this may consist of several development plan documents, including:

- **Core Strategy (or Local Plan)** – this outlines the vision for the city and how it will be achieved. Also includes development management policies, or these may be in a separate local plan document;
- **Site Allocations** – this allocates land for specific uses; and
- **Area Action Plans** – these provide more detailed information to guide development in a specific area where significant development is planned.

Supplementary Planning Documents – these documents supplement and elaborate upon policies and proposals set out in development plan documents. Although they are not subject to independent examination, they will undergo public consultation, and must be consistent with national planning policies. These documents may focus on specific issues (such as affordable housing) or they may provide site specific development guidance. They cannot change policies contained within the Local Plan or Neighbourhood Plans, but can give detail on how those policies are implemented.

Sustainability Appraisals – these will be produced by the City Council alongside local development plan documents and, where appropriate, supplementary planning documents. Sustainability Appraisals examine the impact of policies and proposals on economic, social and environmental factors, and fulfil an important legal requirement known as 'Strategic Environmental Assessment'). Sustainability Appraisals are iterative, prepared alongside policy documents, and will be available for consultation alongside the development plan documents or supplementary planning documents that they relate to at formal stages of consultation.

Annual Monitoring Report – the performance of planning policies will be reviewed in an Annual Monitoring Report. The Annual Monitoring Report will also review the implementation of the Local Development Scheme and Statement of Community Involvement in Planning. There will not be consultation on this report as it is a factual document, but we may contact specific groups to obtain some of the data required.

3.2 Figure 1 over the page explains how the different planning policy documents link together to form the Local Plan for Oxford and their relationship with the wider planning process.

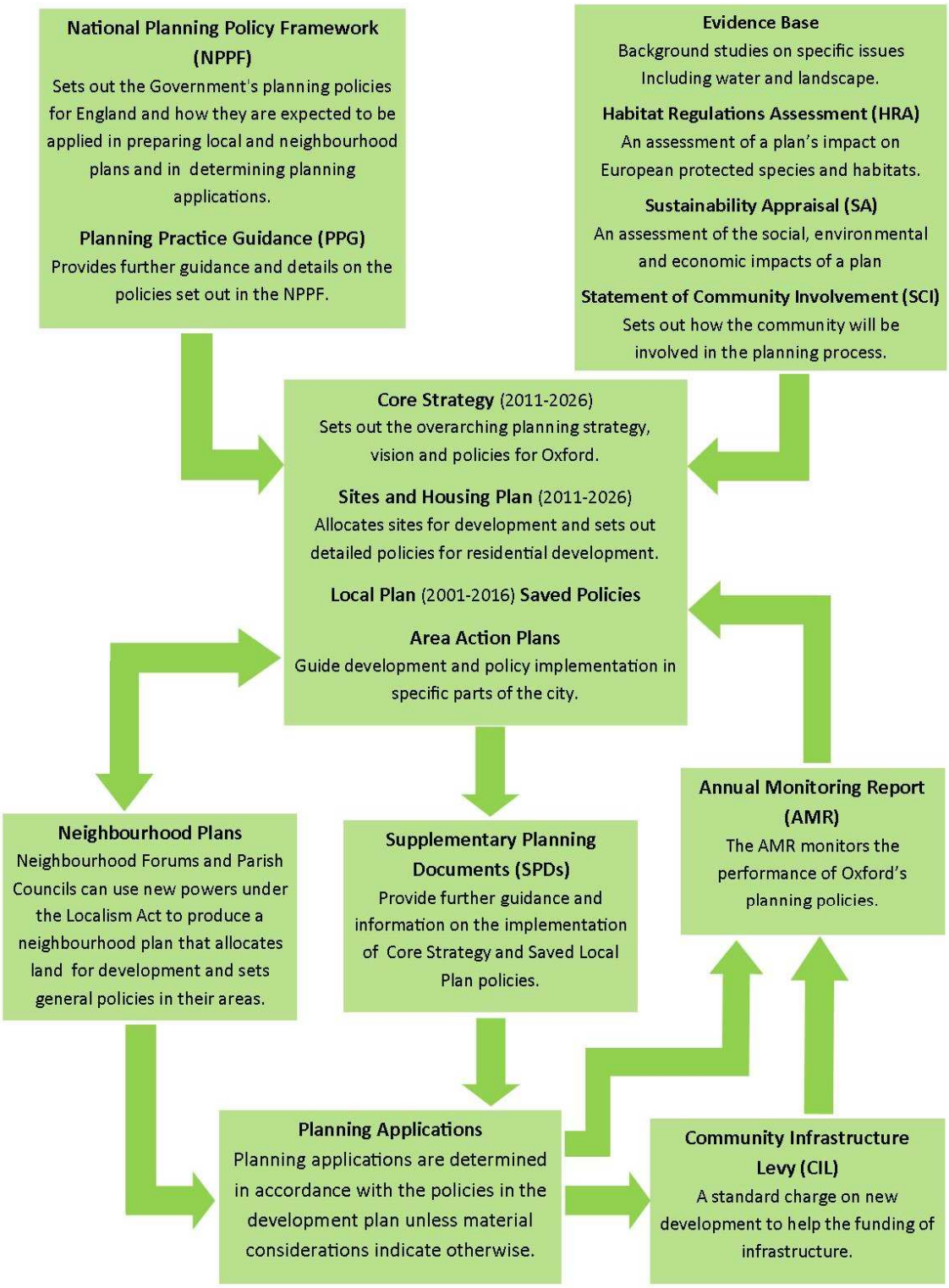

Figure 1: Oxford's Local Plan and its relationship to the wider planning process

How will we involve people in the preparation of planning policy documents?

3.3 There are a range of different methods of involvement that we may use in preparing planning policy documents (as set out in Appendices Tables 1 and 2). The methods we use will depend on the subject and the stage in the plan-making process.

3.4 Different levels of involvement that may be appropriate in different circumstances:

- *Participation* – interactions between the City Council and the community and/or stakeholders to identify issues and exchange views (for example, when considering the issues a policy document might need to address);

- *Consultation* - asking for the views of the community and stakeholders (for example, asking for views on a draft document); and

- *Information-sharing* - providing information to the community and stakeholders (for example, providing updates on the progress of planning policy documents).

3.5 Sometimes it will be more appropriate to gather a wider-range of less detailed comments using methods such as questionnaires and surveys. This is often a good way to collect views from a large number of people, although it does not generally provide much opportunity for an in-depth discussion of the issues.

3.6 At other times we will need to talk to people in more detail, such as through workshops or meetings with specific groups, to gain a deeper understanding of their views. When undertaking consultation on planning policy documents, we will aim to use a variety of methods to reflect the topic matters and to try to reach the different community groups that may be affected.

3.7 We will continue to look to best practice examples in this evolving field.

Consultation on Development Plan Documents

3.8 The key stages that the City Council will follow in preparing the Local Plan (which may consist of several development plan documents) are largely set out in legislation and national policy, but the SCIP sets out in more detail what we will do in Oxford and how we are going beyond the basic requirements. The process is different for Neighbourhood Plans and Supplementary Planning Documents, which are explained later in this SCIP.

3.9 The key stages for Development Plan Documents are:

1. Establish an appropriate consultation programme for each document - When starting work on any new development plan document, the authorising City Council body will agree a bespoke consultation programme for that document. This will set out which communication and consultation methods are most appropriate for that document and how they will be used at each stage, so that both councillors and the public are clear about what consultation can be expected from the start. This tailored consultation programme will be published and will then be followed throughout the process of preparing the document.

Whilst this stage is not required by the Regulations, the City Council is adopting this approach to ensure that consultations can be tailored appropriately and proportionately to the issues and the community groups that may be affected. Table 1 in the Appendices provides more information on the methods of communication and consultation that may be used.

2. Early community and stakeholder involvement[3] – Before policy writing begins, informal consultation will be undertaken and a process of informal dialogue will commence. This may be as wide-ranging as simply asking questions about what the document and policies should include.

The main purpose of this stage is information-gathering. This stage enables people to put forward their ideas and to participate in the initial stages of developing proposals and options whilst the discussion is still fairly broad. Once we are sure that we have understood and considered all the views expressed we will start to refine this and narrow it down, to formulate options and proposals, including input, as appropriate, by City Council bodies.

3. Consultation on the emerging options or draft policies (as applicable) – As part of the process of refining the options and policies, the City Council may publish an options document and/or a draft policies document, including a related Sustainability Appraisal, for public comment. Any formal consultation will normally last for six weeks. There is also likely to be informal dialogue through this period, as appropriate.

4. Pre-submission[4] **consultation**– When the City Council has refined the policies to what it thinks is the final version, it will publish the document for a final stage of consultation before submitting it to the Government. Normally at this stage the key evidence documents that sit behind the plan/policies will also be made available including the Sustainability Appraisal. Consultation will normally last for six weeks.

Following this consultation, the City Council will normally only make minor changes to the document, such as to clarify text. The City Council will collate the comments received and pass them to the Government Inspector to consider along with all of the other supporting documents and comments from earlier stages of consultation.

5. Independent examination[5] – This will be held by an independent Inspector (appointed by the Government). The examination process is determined by the Inspector so it is not for the City Council to propose a process for this stage in the SCIP, or to replicate what is already set out in government guidance or regulations elsewhere. The examination period commences once the document has been submitted to the Government and ends when the Inspector issues their report or conclusions. Within this period there are usually hearing sessions, where people who have commented at the pre-submission stage may be invited by the Inspector to speak in a round-table discussion.

6. Adoption – The final stage is for the City Council to adopt the document. The decision will usually be made by Full Council, and published on the Council website. It is at this point that the document formally becomes part of the Local Plan, and can be fully applied to relevant planning decisions.

[3] At the time of writing this is known as the 'Regulation 18' stage in reference to Regulation 18 of The Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012.
[4] At the time of writing this is known as the 'Regulation 19 stage' in reference to Regulation 19 of The Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012.
[5] At the time of writing, this is known as the 'Regulation 24 stage', in reference to Regulation 24 of The Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012.

Consultation on Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs)

3.10 The key stages in preparing SPDs are slightly different to those for development plan documents because they normally provide supplementary guidance rather than policies, as set out below:

1. Establish an appropriate consultation programme - When starting work on any new supplementary planning document, the authorising City Council committee will agree a bespoke consultation programme for that document. This will set out the details of which communication and consultation methods are most appropriate for that document and how they will be used at each stage, so that both councillors and the public are clear about what consultation can be expected from the start. This consultation programme will then be followed throughout the process of preparing the document.

Whilst this is not required through the Regulations, the City Council is adopting this approach to ensure that consultations can be tailored appropriately and proportionately to the issues and the community groups that may be affected. Table 2 in the Appendices provides more information of the methods of communication and consultation that may be used.

2. Early community and stakeholder involvement –The main purpose of this stage of involvement is information gathering. This may be as wide-ranging as simply asking questions about what the document should include or the approach it should take, or it may be more focused on specific issues and options. Consultation may be focused on those with specific expertise in the subject area, like developers or highway engineers, or on people living and working in a specific geographical area.

A Sustainability Appraisal will be produced where appropriate but is not always required for SPDs, depending on the topic.

3. Consultation on the emerging draft – As with development plan documents, we will usually publish a draft document for formal consultation for six weeks. We will consider all the comments received and will refine and finalise the document before progressing to adoption. Unlike development plan documents, there is no examination process for SPDs.

4. Adoption – The document, together with an analysis of comments received (as applicable), will be reported through City Council committees if appropriate. It will normally be adopted by the City Executive Board and published on the City Council website. It is at this point that the SPD will hold full weight as a 'material consideration' in relevant planning decisions.

Keeping you updated throughout the planning policy preparation process

3.11 Throughout the process of preparing development plan documents and supplementary planning documents, from the earliest stages through to adoption, we will keep the community and stakeholders informed of progress in the following ways:

- The latest version of any formally published consultation documents will be available on the City Council website and at relevant deposit points[6] throughout the city;

[6] An up-to-date list of deposit points (where paper copies of consultation documents will be made available) and their opening times is provided on the City Council website.

- The City Council will acknowledge representations received by electronic means (email or online forms) at each consultation stage;
- Reports to City Council committees (including City Executive Board and Full Council) are available on the City Council website and these meetings are held in public;
- At examination stage (for local development plan documents), we will tell those who asked to be notified when the document has been submitted to the Secretary of State. We will also publish a consultation summary report on the City Council website and the representations from the pre-submission stage will be made available for public inspection;
- The final, adopted versions of documents will be published on the City Council website and at relevant deposit points throughout the city; and
- Throughout the preparation of the plan, an email address and contact phone number will be available for the community and stakeholders to find out the current position on the progress of documents, in addition to the information that will be supplied on the City Council website.

4. Consultation process for Neighbourhood Development Plans

4.1 As well as formal consultation comments to inform the SCIP, the Council has also reflected on previous consultation experiences, from the perspective of the customer and of the Council. Recent policy document

4.2 The preparation of neighbourhood planning documents is led by local communities in accordance with the Regulations[7] and the principles of localism. As such, the majority of the community engagement in the preparation of Neighbourhood Plans will be undertaken by the neighbourhood planning group[8].

4.3 There are then certain stages where the City Council is required to carry out formal consultation in accordance with the Regulations[9] as follows:

a) Application to designate a Neighbourhood Area

If a community wishes to produce a Neighbourhood Plan then the first stage is for the area to be designated. The City Council will publish the name of the neighbourhood area, a map, and the name of the relevant body who applied for the designation on the City Council website. People will be able to comment on the extent of the area to be designated. In addition, the neighbourhood planning group will be encouraged to let the local community know through local notices, their own websites, and other means as appropriate.

Following this consultation, the City Council will publish its decision to either designate or refuse the application (with reasons, if refusing) on the City Council website.

b) Application to designate a Neighbourhood Planning Group

The City Council will publish a copy of the application and details about how to comment, on the City Council website. The City Council will also encourage the neighbourhood planning group to publicise the application in the local area.

If the City Council agrees to designate the group, it will publish the name of the group, a copy of the constitution, and contact details on the City Council website. If the City Council decides to refuse the designation then it will publish reasons for the refusal on the City Council website.

c) Options testing and preparing the Neighbourhood Plan

(Consultation carried out by the neighbourhood planning group)

During the preparation of their plan, the neighbourhood planning group will need to carry out consultation on the issues and options being considered, and involve the local community. They will be encouraged by the City Council to engage as early as possible, and to take into account emerging best practice in this relatively new, and still evolving, area of planning policy. They may also need to prepare a Sustainability Appraisal and consult on that as well.

d) Pre-submission consultation

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[7] At the time of writing, this is The Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012.

[8] Neighbourhood planning groups are community groups that are designated to take forward neighbourhood planning in areas without parish councils. Where a Parish Council exists for local area, then they are the only group allowed to progress a neighbourhood plan in their area. It is the role of the City Council to agree who should be the neighbourhood planning group for the neighbourhood areas without a parish council.

[9] We have produced a help sheet that provides an overview of the roles of the neighbourhood planning group and the City Council at each stage of the Neighbourhood Plan Process.

(Consultation carried out by the neighbourhood planning group)
At this final stage of consultation, before the plan is submitted to the City Council, the neighbourhood planning group will be encouraged to take into account emerging best practice.

e) Publicity/submission consultation

Once the neighbourhood planning group has submitted their Neighbourhood Plan to the City Council, the City Council will publish the plan and supporting documents in accordance with the regulatory requirements[10] on the City Council website. Copies of these documents will also be available at the main council offices (St Aldate's Chambers). The City Council will contact all those who we are advised have commented previously on the Neighbourhood Plan to invite final comments.

f) Decision on a Neighbourhood Plan

The City Council will send a copy of the Neighbourhood Plan, the supporting documents and comments received at the submission stage to an appointed examiner for independent examination. Hearing sessions, if required (at the discretion of the Examiner), will be open to the public to attend but only those invited by the Examiner may participate in discussions.

The City Council will then publish the Examiner's report and decision statement on the City Council website, and make it available to view at the City Council's main offices (St Aldate's Chambers), before proceeding to arrange (subject to a favourable Examiner's report) the referendum.

g) Referendum

At least 28 days before the referendum takes place, the City Council will publish the following documents on its website (hard copies will also be made available at the main City Council offices, St Aldate's Chambers): the draft Neighbourhood Plan; the Examiner's report; a summary of the representations submitted to the Examiner; a statement that the City Council is satisfied that the plan meets the basic conditions; general information on town and country planning to ensure voters have sufficient knowledge to make an informed decision; and an information statement that provides detailed information on the referendum arrangements. The City Council will also encourage the neighbourhood planning group to let local people know about the referendum and encourage a high participation rate so that it is representative.

The Regulations[11] cover all aspects of organising and conducting a referendum, so it is not for the City Council to propose processes in the SCIP, or to replicate what is already set out in government guidance or regulations elsewhere. If the majority of those who vote in a referendum are in favour of the draft Neighbourhood Plan, then the Neighbourhood Plan becomes part of the statutory development plan for the area. As such, it will then steer relevant planning decisions for that area of the city.

[10] At the time of writing this is a minimum of six weeks, as set out in The Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012.
[11] At the time of writing this is the Neighbourhood Planning (Referendum) Regulations 2012 (as amended by the Neighbourhood Planning (Referendum) (Amendment) Regulations 2013 and 2014) and the Neighbourhood Planning (Prescribed Dates) Regulations 2012.

5. Engagement processes for planning applications

5.1 The degree of involvement in planning applications will vary according to the nature of the individual application, and at different stages. The processes are different to those for policies, because usually there is a role both for the applicant as well as the City Council, especially on larger applications.

Consultations before planning applications are submitted to the City Council

5.2 All applicants (or their agents) are strongly encouraged to discuss development proposals with the City Council before applying for planning permission. Applicants are also encouraged, especially for major applications, to engage with the community and relevant stakeholders, to a degree proportionate to the nature of the proposal, at the earliest appropriate opportunity.

For minor applications (such as house extensions), all applicants are encouraged to discuss their plans with their neighbours before submitting a planning application. This could involve speaking with them or putting a note through the door.

If the scheme falls within the definition of a 'major' application[12] then applicants are strongly encouraged to contact those who live, work and/or undertake other activities in the surrounding area who may be affected by the proposals, to inform them of their plans and to identify/discuss any potential issues and opportunities[13] so that the submitted proposal acknowledges and addresses community concerns, even if it cannot fully resolve them. Consultation at this stage should be appropriate and proportionate, and will normally include helping the community and non-planning experts to visualise what the development will look like and to understand the impacts on the area.

Whilst there is no legal obligation for applicants to undertake consultation at the pre-application stage, failure to consult properly is likely to lead to objections being made by interested parties (such as neighbouring residents) later on in the process which could be material to the determination of a planning application. Pre-application consultation may be made a formal requirement via a Planning Performance Agreement[14] where relevant.

A statement setting out how consultation has been carried out and any changes made to the proposals as a result, is encouraged to be submitted with the planning application, and should be easy for the community to find so that they can easily see the feedback. Developers are also encouraged to feedback directly to the community via a second round of pre-application engagement, before submitting the application to the Council, to explain any changes to the proposal and how concerns have been addressed.

We also encourage applicants to let the local ward councillors know about their proposals. The City Council's Code of Practice for councillors on planning applications advises that councillors attending public meetings should take great care to maintain their impartial role, listen to all the points of view expressed by the speakers and public, and not state a conclusive decision on any pre-application proposals or submitted planning applications.

[12] At the time of writing, major applications are defined by Article 2 of the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure (England) Order 2015.

[13] We have produced help sheets on the Council website which set out examples of good practice in pre-application engagement

[14] A planning performance agreement sets timescales for actions by the City Council and applicants at the pre-application and application stage. (See the Planning Practice Guidance for further information.)

Nonetheless we would encourage applicants on major schemes to make local councillors aware of their proposals so that they can help to bring it to the attention of their constituents at the earliest stages.

Similarly, applicants are encouraged to contact local representative groups who may be able to help raise awareness and explain the proposals to the community, and may also be able to provide representative views from a community perspective and provide local insight.

5.3 There are significant benefits to involving communities and stakeholders early on in the process of preparing of a proposal before it is finalised and submitted to the City Council for planning permission, including:

- Issues and opportunities can be identified, and where possible addressed, early on in the process, making more efficient use of resources (both for the applicant and the City Council);
- Community and stakeholder views can be taken into consideration early on, helping to achieve higher quality design that utilises local knowledge and better reflects communities' needs and aspirations;
- Addressing issues early on is likely to result in higher quality proposals that are likely to move through the application process more quickly and smoothly;
- Responding to community and stakeholder views early on reduces the likelihood of objections at the application stage; and
- Early engagement increases openness and transparency.

5.4 With regard to major applications, it is noted that Section 122 of the Localism Act 2011 currently requires applicants to carry out pre-application consultations where a proposed development meets criteria set out by the Government in a development order. In future there may be additional development orders published in relation to this requirement, which will influence the requirements for applicants to consult on major applications. Irrespective of the regulations, the City Council is keen to encourage pre-application engagement.

Involvement once applications are submitted and are under consideration by the City Council

5.5 The Government sets out minimum standards for consulting on planning applications that the City Council must comply with (see Appendices Table 3). These standards apply to all applications. If the City Council goes beyond the standards required by the Government then there needs to be a balance between cost, speed of decision making, and providing a reasonable opportunity for public comment.

5.6 People are encouraged to 'self service' where possible, using updates on the City Council website and through alert services such as PlanningFinder to find out about planning applications.

5.7 The City Council will make information available about planning applications using the following methods (underlined indicates online/electronic information):

Advertisements and site notices – site notices will be placed in the vicinity of the application site to notify the occupiers of the properties most likely to be affected by the development proposals, including those bordering an application site. The number and location of notices will be proportionate to the proposal. Comments are normally required within five weeks of the notice being displayed. Developers are also required to display site

notices for certain types of development. In addition, the City Council is required to publish information about some types of planning application[15] in a local newspaper[16].

Public Access – the details of all submitted planning applications are available on the City Council website to view online through the Public Access system.

PlanningFinder – online tool similar to Public Access which enables the public to view all planning applications. People can also register to receive email updates about individual applications or notifications of new planning applications received within specific postcode areas to help you find out about development in an area.

Weekly list – a list is published weekly of all the valid planning applications we have received. This list also highlights key information such as developments in or affecting conservation areas and developments that could affect a listed building or its setting. The list is available on the City Council website.

Statutory consultees – we are legally required to consult certain organisations as set out in government guidance[17]. The organisations consulted will vary depending on the nature of the proposal and location.

Availability of plans – plans and documents submitted as part of a planning application are available to view online at the main City Council offices (St Aldate's Chambers) during office hours. Paper copies of documents for major planning applications are available in reception, or for other types of planning application are available to view by making an appointment with the relevant case officer in advance. All planning applications are also available to view on the City Council website via Public Access. The website contains further details of the applications including when they are likely to be determined

How planning applications are determined

5.8 Applications are assessed against planning policies by planning officers. An officer will write a report outlining the main issues and considering them against the relevant planning policies before reaching a recommendation to approve or refuse permission for the proposal. Before recommending a decision, the planning officer will make a full site inspection and take account of any comments received from neighbours, interested bodies, and statutory consultees. The results of any consultation will be reported and taken into account in decisions made by, and on behalf of, the City Council.

5.9 In general, planning applications will be determined in accordance with adopted policies, unless material considerations outweigh these policies[18]. A material consideration is a matter that should be taken into account in deciding a planning application, or in an appeal against a planning decision. We have produced a help sheet that provides more information on material considerations which is available on our website to help you comment on applications.

[15] The publicity requirements for different types of planning application are set by the Government in the Planning Practice Guidance.
[16] Qualifying planning applications are currently advertised in the Oxford Times newspaper.
[17] A summary of statutory consultees for planning applications is provided in the Planning Practice Guidance.
[18] Section 70(2) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 and section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.

5.10 Legislation requires that applications are refused only when there are good planning reasons for refusal. In some cases it is appropriate to impose planning conditions in order to render a proposal acceptable. In other cases, officers may ask for small changes to be made to the proposal, and for amended plans to be submitted, in order to resolve issues. Any amended plans will be available on the City Council website and if the changes impact significantly then they will be subject to additional consultation, which may include updated site notices around the site. Alternatively if there are more significant issues to resolve, the application may be determined in its original form and the applicant invited to re-apply with revised proposals as a new application.

5.11 The majority of planning applications are decided by planning officers under delegated powers. These are mainly householder applications and small-scale or minor development proposals. Planning applications are decided in this way to help ensure that the majority are dealt with promptly.

5.12 Other applications are decided by a Planning Committee if:

- The application falls outside officer delegated powers (for example major applications);
- City councillors request that the application is dealt with at committee; or
- The application is submitted on behalf of the City Council or by an officer or city councillor.

5.13 Reports for applications being determined at committee are available for public inspection at the City Council's main offices (St Aldate's Chambers) and on the City Council website usually one week before the committee meeting.

5.14 Planning Committee meetings are open to members of the public to hear the discussion. The following groups will usually have the opportunity to speak at the committee before a decision is reached:

- Parish Councils;
- Objectors/representatives of objectors; and
- Applicants/their agents and supporters.

5.15 Normally a maximum of five minutes is available to speak either against or in support of each application, and this must be shared between all those wishing to speak at the meeting.

5.16 Committee members will then vote on whether to accept the officer's recommendation in the report, and the outcome will be announced verbally at the meeting. Some applications may be deferred to a later meeting if further information or negotiation is needed.

5.17 All decision notices are published on the City Council website (via Public Access). A copy of the decision notice is also sent to the applicant (or their agent).

Appeals against planning application decisions

5.18 If an applicant has a planning application refused, or disagrees with the conditions attached to the granting of permission, or if the City Council fails to decide the application within the agreed timescales, the applicant has a right to appeal. In most cases appeals will be determined by an independent Inspector, although in some cases the Secretary of State may choose to determine the appeal themself. This right of appeal does not extend to a third party (i.e. there is no right of appeal to anyone who is not the applicant).

5.19 The procedures for notifying people of appeals and for submitting comments during the appeal process is set out by the Planning Inspectorate[19], so it is beyond the remit of this SCIP. However for completeness an overview of the process is provided here.

5.20 When an appeal is made, the City Council will contact all those who commented on the original planning application and to adjoining properties, notifying them that an appeal has been made and, depending upon the type of appeal, informing them of how they can submit further comments should they want to do so. There is no need to repeat comments submitted at the application stage as these comments will be forwarded to the independent Inspector by the City Council. Local councillors are also notified.

5.21 The majority of appeals are dealt with by written representations and, where this is the case, the appeal is decided on the basis of the statements submitted by the appellant, the City Council and any third parties. Where a public hearing is to be held to consider an appeal, a site notice is also erected and in some cases information is published in the press. Appeal hearings and inquiries are open to the public and members of the public may also be given an opportunity to speak, at the discretion of the Inspector.

[19] The Planning Inspectorate guide to Planning Appeals is available online via the Planning Portal website: www.planningportal.gov.uk

6. How will consultations be resourced?

6.1 Undertaking and publicising consultations on planning policy documents and planning applications requires considerable resources.

6.2 The following principles have been applied throughout the SCIP to achieve effective consultation whilst at the same time making best use of City Council resources:

- Electronic methods of communication are promoted as an efficient way to share information with a large number of people and quickly. However, care has been taken to ensure that we do not exclude people who find it difficult to access material online.
- Council-led consultation events will normally be led by City Council planners, but may involve other City Council officers and external resources if needed.
- We will work with other City Council departments, to share costs and resources, and to combine consultations to make best use of the community's time and efforts, and avoid consultation fatigue.
- When producing the consultation programme for new policy documents, we will combine consultation activities where appropriate, and timetabling allows, to get the best value from resources and to avoid consultation fatigue.
- Where major planning applications require significant publicity and engagement, this may also require resources from the applicant, especially at the pre-application stage prior to submitting to the Council.
- The City Council will provide support to neighbourhood planning groups and is required to undertake consultation at specific stages, however the majority of consultation will be organised and funded by the relevant neighbourhood group.

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Appendices

Table 1 Summary of statutory requirements and additional consultation methods for Development Plan documents

Table 2 Summary of statutory requirements and additional consultation methods for Supplementary Planning Documents

Table 3 Summary of Planning Application Consultation

Table 1: Summary of statutory requirements and additional consultation methods for Development Plan Documents

Development Plan Documents (including the Local Plan, Area Action Plans and site allocations)

When starting work on any new Development Plan Document, an appropriate City Council committee (usually the City Executive Board) will agree a specific consultation programme for that document. This will set out which publicity and consultation methods are most appropriate for that document and how they will be used at each stage, so that both councillors and the public are clear about what consultation can be expected.

Stage consultation takes place	**What we must do to consult and notify you** (Statutory requirements)	**Additional methods of informing and consulting you** (We will select the most appropriate methods from this list taking into consideration the subject of the policy document. We will also be mindful of those who may not have access to the internet.)
Early public involvement and Consultation on emerging options or draft policies (May be more than one stage)	Notify the people and organisations listed in the Regulations[20] to tell them the subject of the local development plan document and invite comments on what it should contain. Undertake consultation on the Sustainability Appraisal Scoping Report with the people and organisations listed in Regulations and other bodies as considered appropriate by the City Council.	**Inform at appropriate stages using a combination of the following methods:** • Press release to local news organisations. • Contact groups and/or individuals on the City Council's consultation register by email/letter (contact may be targeted if appropriate to the subject under consideration e.g. targeting people in a specific geographical area). • City Council website. • Social Media (such as Twitter, Facebook and YouTube). • Posters (poster locations could include community noticeboards, libraries and other venues as appropriate). • Leaflet campaigns. • Development Management User Group. • City Council newsletter 'Your Oxford'. • Contact local interest groups (such as Forums and Resident Associations) to ask them to share information with their members. We may also contact other local groups and organisations such as schools, youth groups, university students, business groups, etc. as appropriate. • Newsletters **Consult at an appropriate stage using one or a combination of the following methods:** • Questionnaires and/or comment forms (online and/or paper versions) • Public exhibitions/displays/stalls/road shows (staffed and/or unstaffed) • Interactive displays
Formal public consultation on pre-submission document	Pre-submission document, Sustainability Appraisal and associated documents required by the Regulations[21] to be made available for inspection at the City Council's main offices (St Aldate's Chambers) and published on the City Council website. Notify the statutory bodies listed in Regulations. This includes people who live, work or operate in the area, as considered appropriate by the City Council.	

[20] At the time of writing, these requirements are set out in Regulation 18 of The Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012.
[21] At the time of writing, these requirements are set out in Regulation 19 of The Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012

		• Workshops/'Planning for Real' exercises • Involve pre-existing panels and other regular City Council meetings with groups • One-to-one meetings with key stakeholders • Focus groups • City Council committees • Public meetings • Telephone We may also look to use other consultation methods as best practice continues to evolve. **Each time that we undertake formal consultation we will:** • Make the formal consultation document available on the City Council website, at the City Council's main offices (St Aldate's Chambers), and in appropriate public locations/deposit points in the city (see the help sheet for specific locations of deposit points that we may use, and their opening hours). • Consider all comments received and publish feedback on the City Council website. • Consider extending the consultation period where it includes the summer or Christmas holidays.
Submission to Government and Independent Examination	Make copies of the submission documents available for inspection both online and at the City Council's main offices (St Aldate's Chambers). Notify the statutory bodies listed in the Regulations[22], as well as other people who have requested to be notified of the submission of the Local Plan.	Provide details of the hearing sessions and examination progress via an examination website or dedicated page on the City Council website.
Adoption	Final document, adoption statement, Inspector's report and final Sustainability Appraisal to be made available for inspection at the City Council's main offices (St Aldate's Chambers) and published on	No further consultation needed.

[22] At the time of writing, these requirements are set out in Regulation 22 of The Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012.

	the City Council website as set out in the Regulations[23]. Notify anyone who requested to be notified of adoption and send them a copy of the adoption statement.	

Table 2: Summary of statutory requirements and additional consultation methods for Supplementary Planning Documents

Supplementary Planning Documents When starting work on any new Supplementary Planning Document, an appropriate City Council committee (usually the City Executive Board) will agree a specific consultation programme for that document. This will set out which publicity and consultation methods are most appropriate for that document, so that both councillors and the public are clear about what consultation can be expected.		
Stage consultation takes place	**What we must do to consult and notify you** (Statutory requirements)	**Additional methods of informing and consulting you** (We will select the most appropriate methods from this list taking into consideration the subject of the policy document. We will also be mindful of those who may not have access to the internet.)
Early public involvement and Consultation on draft document	Regulations[24] suggest a minimum 4 week consultation period on draft document.	**To inform at appropriate stages using a combination of**: • Press release to local news organisations. • Contact groups and/or individuals on the City Council's consultation register by email/letter (contact may be targeted if appropriate to the subject under consideration e.g. targeting people in a specific area). • Social Media (such as Twitter, Facebook and YouTube) • City Council website • Posters (poster locations could include: community noticeboards, libraries and other venues as appropriate) • Development Management User Group • Contact local interest groups (such as Forums and Resident Associations) to ask them to share information with their members. We may also contact other local groups and organisations such as schools, youth groups, university students, business groups, etc. as appropriate.

[23] At the time of writing, these requirements are set out in Regulation 26 of The Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012.
[24] At the time of writing, these requirements are set out in Regulation 12/13 of the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012

		To consult at appropriate stages using a combination of: • Questionnaires and/or comment forms (online and/or paper copies) • Public exhibitions/displays/stalls/road shows (staffed and/or unstaffed) • Interactive displays • Workshops/'Planning for Real' Exercises • One-to-one meetings with key stakeholders • Focus groups • Involve pre-existing panels and other regular City Council meetings with groups • Public meetings/area committees. We may also look to use other consultation methods as best practice continues to evolve. **Each time that we undertake formal consultation we will:** • Make the formal consultation documents available on the City Council website, at the City Council's main offices (St Aldate's Chambers) and in appropriate public locations/deposit points in the city (see the supporting paper for specific locations we may use and their opening hours). • Consider all comments received and publish feedback on the City Council website. • Consider extending the consultation period where it includes the summer or Christmas holidays.
Adoption	Prepare and publish a summary of consultation, and make it available for inspection along with the SPD, and the adoption statement, at the main City Council offices (St Aldate's Chambers) and on the City Council website. Notify anyone who requested to be notified of adoption and send them a copy of the adoption statement[25].	No further consultation needed.

[25] At the time of writing, these requirements are set out in Regulation 12/13 of the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012

Table 3: Summary of Planning Application Consultation

Pre-application	Application (what we must do)	Application (what we will do above the statutory minimum)	Decision	Appeal
• We will encourage developers to contact us early on.[26] • For smaller applications (e.g. household extensions), encourage applicants to talk with their neighbours. • For major applications – strongly encourage applicants to make direct contact with adjoining occupiers and any relevant interest groups, provide information and seek feedback, for example via questionnaires, exhibitions, meetings. When the application is submitted, it should then include explanation about how the comments have been addressed. We will particularly encourage applicants to, where appropriate, use illustrative measures to	• Advertise in a local newspaper (Oxford Times) and display site notices for applications involving listed buildings, conservation areas, environmental impact assessments*, applications affecting a public right of way* and applications which depart from the development plan* (*indicates will also publish on website). • For major applications – advertise in a local newspaper (and on our website) and display an appropriate number of site notices offering five weeks to make comments. • For minor and other applications – display an appropriate number of site notices with five weeks to make comments.	• Advertise applications to certify the lawfulness of existing development, and some applications involving telecom work in a local newspaper. • Wider consultation of local residents and interest groups, if appropriate, depending on the nature of the proposal. • Details of applications published on the City Council website via the weekly list and Public Access. • Via Public Access and PlanningFinder, applications can be searched for individually. • Large proposals may also feature under 'hot topics' on the City Council website.	• For applications decided by committee (smaller and larger), applicants and the public will be allowed to speak at Committee (up to total five minutes for all objectors). • Decision notices will be viewable on our website.	• Appeal procedures are determined by the Planning Inspectorate. Consultation on appeals varies according to the procedure being followed. • For most types of appeal, the City Council will send letters to adjoining properties and to anyone who commented on the original application, notifying them of the appeal. • If the appeal is following the written representations, hearing or inquiry procedures and not a fast track procedure, this letter will also set out how comments can be submitted.

[26] There may be additional fee for this service. Further details about pre-application advice are provided on the City Council website.

assist the local community in understanding the proposal (see website for additional information about examples to help visualisation). This may also be applicable during period of the application being considered, depending on the technique used. • For applicants of major applications where a Planning Performance Agreement is in place, we will seek to incorporate pre-application community engagement as a formal requirement. • We will encourage applicants of major applications to engage with the Oxford Design Review Panel, both at pre-application stage and at the point when a more detailed proposal is set out.	• Depending on the nature of the application, consult with appropriate statutory consultees.	• Every planning application will have a nominated planning officer as a main point of contact for interested parties. • A planning officer will visit site prior to recommending a decision.		• There is no opportunity to submit comments on appeals following a fast track procedure (such as the householder appeal procedure). • Copies of all comments received at the application stage will be forwarded to the Planning Inspectorate. • Members of the public may also be given the opportunity to speak at a hearing or inquiry.

Statutory consultation bodies will be allowed a longer period of time to comment on applications where this is prescribed by legislation.

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Appendix 2 Risk Register - Statement of Community Involvement in Planning 2015

					Date Raised	Owner	Gross		Current		Residual		Comments	Controls				
Title	Risk description	Opp/ threat	Cause	Consequence			I	P	I	P	I	P		Control description	Due date	Status	Progress %	Action Owner
SCI becomes out-of-date	The 2006 SCI has become out-of-date within a few years and the same could happen to the 2014 version. If that were the case then a knock-on effect would be that it could potentially affect a policy document being approved by an Inspector at independent examination.	T	The cause of the risk is continued national changes in legislation and regulations affecting the planning system	Processes and procedures that may not fully comply with current legislation or regulations, potentially causing difficulties at examination.	19/11/14	Head of Service	2	3	2	3	2	2		Mitigation proposed is to set out many of the details in supporting guidance that can be more easily updated	When the SCI is adopted, and ongoing review thereafter			Head of Service
Appropriate resources	Consultation processes on both planning applications and planning policy documents will have budgetary implications for the City Council, which need to reflect the scale/nature of consultation envisaged	T	Expectations in relation to the level of consultation may exceed the resources which have been allocated	It would have negative implications for the reputation of the City Council if consultation did not match stated expectations because of budgetary constraints. Likewise there would be adverse financial consequences if spending outstripped the available budgets	19/11/14	Head of Service	3	3	3	3	3	2		The report clearly indicates the budgetary implications of, for example, reintroducing neighbour notification letters on planning applications. It is also proposed to agree with members a specific consultation programme for each new statutory policy document.	When the SCI is adopted, and annual review thereafter			Head of Service

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Appendix C

Statement of Community Involvement in Planning

Public Involvement Statement May 2015

Summary of responses

and

How the consultation responses have shapedthe Statement of Community Involvement in Planning

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Statement of Community Involvement in Planning: Public Involvement Statement
May 2015

Introduction

The Statement of Community Involvement in Planning (SCIP) sets out how the City Council will involve the local community and stakeholders in preparing planning policy documents and determining planning applications.

In revising the SCIP, it was important to involve the community and other stakeholders, in order to develop an approach that reflects the needs and aspirations of the community, stakeholders, as well as regulatory requirements.

This Public Involvement Statement explains:

i. The consultation and engagement that was undertaken to inform the revised SCIP;
ii. Who responded to the formal consultation; and
iii. How the commentshave been taken into account in preparing the SCIP.

Consultation and engagement to inform the review of theSCIP

There were several ways that the City Council used people's comments, about our consultation processes, to inform the review of the SCIP. We published a draft version of the SCIP for formal consultation, and we also reviewed people's comments and complaints from the last year where they related to engagement in the planning process.

Engagement to inform the initial drafting of theSCIP*(informal early engagement)*

Prior to commencing the review of the SCIP we reviewed various sources of feedback about our current approach to consultation, such as what works well, what could be improved, as well as asking people how they prefer to contact or be contacted by the City Council.

In order to do this we:

- Sent out questionnaires with the Pre-submission consultation for the Northern Gateway AAP (July 2014) asking how individuals and groups how they want to find out about, and be involved in, planning in Oxford;
- Reviewed comments, compliments and complaints received byCity Development;
- Reviewed feedback forms from previous consultation events;
- Spoke to colleagues across the planning department, as well as the corporate consultation officer.
- Reviewed responses to the City Development Customer Awareness Survey (2013) and the Planning Policy Customer First Project (2013).

The information gained helped to identify the main areas of change in the document, and toinform the first draft of the revised SCIP.

Consultation on the draft SCIP*(formal consultation)*

We then published for consultation the draft SCIP to get further feedback from the community and stakeholders about our proposed approach, andto if they had any other ideas for improving planning consultations.

The consultation ran for six weeks from 6th January to 17th February 2015. People could submit comments via an online questionnaire, printed copies of a questionnaire, or by email or letter. Hard copies of the consultation documents were available to view on the website, at the City Council's main offices (St Aldate's Chambers), and at public libraries across the City during opening hours.

We also contacted the following people that the consultation was taking place and let them know how they could get involved:

- All those registered on the City Council's consultation database as having an interest in planning in Oxford (approximately 2,000 people);
- All the organisations and individuals listed on the City Council's planning policy consultation database (approximately 300 people, including national and local interest groups, residents' associations, local and national government organisations, parish councils, planning agents and developers);
- Participants of theDevelopment Management User Group (representatives of approximately 25 organisations who regularly use Oxford's planning services, such as planning agents); and
- Oxford City Council councillors.

Who responded to the formal consultation?

A total of 23 responses were received at the formal consultation stage. This relatively low response rate was not un-expected due to the procedural nature of the subject matter. People tend to be more interested when there is a specific location or development proposal to discuss.

However despite the low response rate, the comments received were from a range of service users (Figure 1) and provided a large amount of detailed information and suggestions for service improvements.

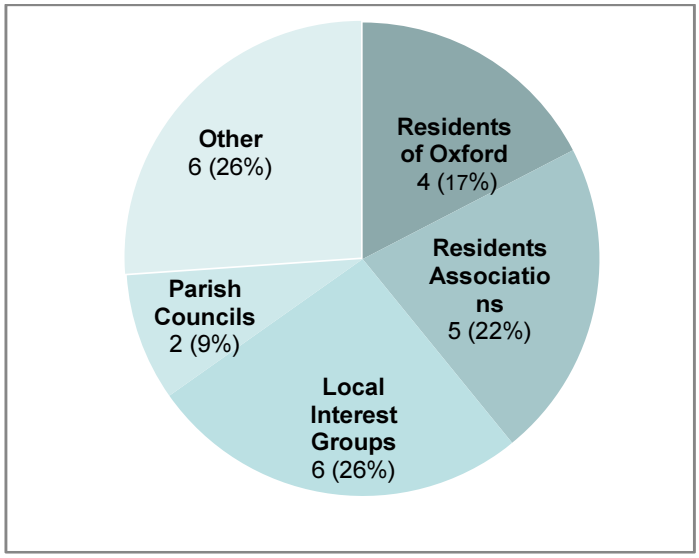

Figure 1: Responses to the SCIP formal consultation (January-February 2015)

The ‘other’ responses received included: The University of Oxford; Wolvercote Neighbourhood Forum; an architect; The Mobile Operators Association; Natural England; and the Highways Agency.

The local interest groups that responded included: Oxford Preservation Trust; Oxford Civic Society; and Headington Action.

How the comments have been taken into account in preparing the SCIP

The table below summarises the comments received at the formal stage of consultation and explains how we have taken them into consideration.

The comments were generally quite detailed and specific, based on the users experiences of planning in Oxford, so there were not necessarily common themes across them, however some of the main themes from the comments were:

- Early engagement is widely supported;
- Over-reliance on online consultation methods. We need to ensure that we do not exclude those without internet access;
- IT issues are regularly encountered with the current consultation systems
- Officer reports should be clearer in how comments have been considered (feelings that comments were ignored or not heard);
- Be upfront about how consultation responses will be used and be clear that consultation is not a vote;
- Work more closely with community and representative groups, in making people aware of consultations and getting people involved;

In some cases we have made changes directly to the SCIP wording, for example:

- We have made our commitment to early community engagement even stronger in both the planning policy and planning application processes. This includes providing additional advice for developers on how they can engage with communities at the pre-application stage;
- There is a commitment in the SCIP’s core principles to provide feedback on consultations and to be clear about how we have considered comments. We will be exploring new ways of communicating this to community through the SCIP Action Plan;
- We have provided more information on who Oxford’s communities are;
- We have emphasised even more strongly our commitment to ensuring that those without access to the internet will not be excluded from our consultations.

In other cases there may be wider issues that we cannot address immediately in the SCIP but nonetheless they are constructive points that will help us to continuously improve public engagement in planning decisions. Those points have been noted and an ‘Action Plan’ has been drawn up to set out clearly how we intend to respond to them appropriately through other means. This includes some of the on-going IT issues, and also where we need to do further work to explore communication tools such as social media.

There were also some issues raised that did not result in changes to the SCIP (for example when the issue raised had already been covered by the SCIP, or when the suggestion was beyond the scope of what we could reasonably deliver). Where this is the case, we have explained why.

In considering people’s comments, it is important to note that public comments are not the only factor that needs to be taken into account in planning decisions. We have to balance a number of factors, including government policy and legislation, best practice, and political

priorities or decisions about what is in the best interest of those living or working in the city, including people who may have been silent during a consultation.

We do however recognise that it can be frustrating for people, if you have taken the time to read materials and prepare well-thought responses, if the policy or decision document does not then say what you want it to. This is one of the points that came through clearly from this particular consultation.

As such, we hope that this document helps to explain how we have taken into account all comments, even if the final document does not fully reflect the points you made, and we hope that you will engage in future planning decisions in Oxford.

Summary of comments and actions or responses

General topic or section of the document	Summary of comment	Response or action
Principles for community involvement in planning decisions	Do more to engage those without access to the internet	The City Council's commitment to continue to provide for those who find it difficult to access material online has been emphasised in the SCIP. We will continue to provide alternative methods of communication/consultation for those without internet access, whilst balancing that there are also many benefits to online consultation methods (such as the ability to reach large numbers of people quickly and easily) and the SCIP also seeks to make the most of these opportunities.
	Over reliance on online consultation methods	
	Use plain, clear language	The SCIP already makes a commitment to use plain English, however a commitment to make planning policy documents clear and concise has also been added to the SCIP.
	More clarity, less lengthy documents	
	Be clearer about how consultation responses are considered and used	A commitment to do this has been added to the SCIP's overarching principals for community engagement.
	Consultation documents should be provided as black and white PDFs. Colour documents are hard to download and expensive to print.	No action required. We already provide the majority of consultation documents as PDFs, which are quicker to download. Colour documents are used to ensure that images and diagrams are clear, and to help break up long pieces of text. Documents are checked for clarity so that they can also be printed in black and white if desired.
	More innovative consultation ideas needed	A commitment to maintain awareness of current best practice and new and evolving methods of communication and consultation has been added to the SCIP. The SCIP aims to not be overly prescriptive so that the City Council or developers are not constrained, and to enable opportunities for innovation and to facilitate use of new ideas or best practice.

	The intention in the Community Engagement Policy to put collaboration at the heart of the planning process is not reflected in the SCIP. The SCIP is orientated towards consultation – getting people to agree to proposals already drafted. Collaboration is about bringing the community's knowledge into the process to create better proposals and better places.	The SCIP emphasises the importance of early community engagement in planning processes, with the aim of enabling a more collaborative approach to planning. Earlier engagement gives the greater scope to shape policies and development proposals. The City Council also strongly encourages developers to engage with communities early on in developing proposals.
	Other LPAs have been bolder in seizing the spirit of localism e.g. Lambeth has stated a vision of citizens, businesses and council working together on an equal footing, allowing citizens more direct influence over services. The SCIP's approach does not appear consistent with localism and NPPF.	It is an aim of the City Council to improve dialogue and consultation throughout Council processes, including planning. This is reflected in the SCIP but also in wider corporate strategies such as the Corporate Plan 2015-19, the Community Engagement Policy Statement 2014-17, and the Corporate Equality Scheme 2012-15. The Council is however keen to carry on learning from best practice in other authorities, and as new and innovative ideas emerge, as noted in the Action Plan. In particular through the review of the SCIP, a review was carried out to compare best practice in comparable authorities in terms of how they encourage developers to carry out effective pre-application engagement.
Defining Oxford's community	Clearly define the community.	A section has been added to the SCIP to explain the different notions of Oxford's communities.
	Current planning issues require the involvement of people and organisations outside the City but who live, work or operate within the City. This needs to be acknowledged and understood.	This has been taken into consideration when defining Oxford's communities, and in deciding who to contact about the consultation.
	Oxford's community is not homogenous. The SCIP is silent on how different groups can collaborate. Collaborative involvement of different groups will enable policies to better reflect community priorities and local needs; increased community commitment; stronger, more cohesive future communities and policies enhanced by local knowledge. Building relationships with representative groups is particularly important but how will this be done?	The Action Plan alongside the SCIP includes an item to review how we work with representative groups, particularly in the context that such groups may help to reach wider audiences and to raise awareness of consultations and planning processes.

Planning policy - consultation methods	Present details as an online presentation so it can be heard, seen and read.	Opportunities to do this will be explored over the next 12 months, see the Action Plan for details.
	Page 11 of the Draft SCIP refers to the use of a 'variety of techniques'. An explanation of these techniques is needed. If this is to refer to techniques described in Section 6 on p14 or the Appendices, this should be made clearer in the final SCIP.	This section of the SCIP has been updated to clarify that a variety of consultation methods will be used as listed in Appendices Table 1.
	It is not sufficient for preferred options to be circulated informally to 'stakeholders' and it is not clear under what circumstances this would be considered appropriate. Such a vague statement should not be in the SCIP. All options should be made available for public comment.	This text has been amended in the SCIP.
	The Draft SCIP (page14) refers to the use of charettes. Most people will not understand what these are. The statement itself says that plain English should be used so an alternative word is needed here. Where technical terms are unavoidable they need to be explained.	This section of the SCIP has been updated so that the word charette is no longer used.
	Consultation methods are ever only as good and effective as the care taken in listening to and applying the messages learned.	Ways to monitor and review the quality of consultations, as well as how we feed back the learning from consultations, will be explored over the next 12 months, see the Action Plan for further details.
	Provide feedback from consultation exercises.	The SCIP reiterates commitment to provide feedback and keep the community informed about progress and outcomes. There is also an additional action in the Action Plan, to explore how we can make it clearer to people how comments have been taken into account, and to encourage clearer feedback from applicants on major applications.
	Stop limiting response to a certain amount of characters	Different consultation systems permit different types of responses, and where we have the option to limit characters then we try to balance this with the type of question. However there is always the option to submit letters by email or in the post, if someone feels that the consultation questionnaire form (or online version) is too restrictive in length of response.

Planning policy – early engagement	Early public involvement provides opportunities for communities to initiate ideas. Early consultation will give people more time to consider the issues.	The SCIP promotes early engagement in the preparing of planning policy documents (as well as planning applications).
	Consultations should take place before plans are agreed, rather than after.	The SCIP promotes early engagement in the preparing of planning policy documents, in addition to consultations on draft versions of plans.
	The Draft SCIP states that early consultation should be proportionate but it is not clear how it will be determined who should be involved at the early stages of policy formulation.An attempt has been made to show an example of how early public involvement would be undertaken and this is welcome but perhaps could be expanded to give assurance that all interests will be considered (pages 11 and 12).	The SCIP has been amended to highlight the new commitment to produce a bespoke consultation programme for each local plan document. The programme will be agreed by the authorising City Council body when embarking on new planning policy documents. Those consultation programmes will specify the key groups that we will aim to involve at each stage of document preparation, and how.
	Publishing a consultation document before informal consultation/dialogue may be seen as pre-empting free discussion. It would be better if this were changed to: 'This will be wide-ranging and involve asking questions about what the document and policies should include.'	Text changed in the SCIP.
Planning policy – handling consultation responses	The council is quite good at getting feedback on policy documents. It is less good at handling such feedback, and demonstrating that feedback has been taken into account. A lot of goodwill is lost by inadequate feedback to feedback.	The SCIP makes a commitment to provide feedback and keep the community informed about progress and outcomes. Exploring new ways to provide feedback on planning policy consultations is also included the Action Plan, to be explored further over the next 12 months.

	Preferred options should derive from consultation and not be the preferred Council options, unless no comments are received from the public. When options are published the actual number of responses in favour of a particular policy should be given rather than the percentage of the responses received so that the number supporting an option is clear. Pre-submission collating of comments should accurately reflect the comments made. Unfortunately, on occasions in the past local residents have considered that there has been a rather selective process giving emphasis to the Council's views.	SCIP has been amended to set out a commitment to be clearer about how consultation responses will be used, and to explain the issues that can and cannot be taken into consideration. This matter is also identified for further exploration via the Action Plan.
Planning Policy – general comments	For the Annual Monitoring Report to review community involvement there needs to be some consultation with representatives of the community. For the results of monitoring to be credible, it should not be conducted internally by the Council but also involve some independent scrutiny.	The AMR is a factual document, and the section about the SCIP primarily assesses whether the procedural requirements of the SCIP have been complied with. Data relating to the quality of consultations has recently been added to the AMR (2013/14) and this information is taken from consultation feedback forms completed by members of the community. In addition the Action Plan contains a commitment to explore other ways of monitoring and reviewing the success of consultations.
	An indication of the anticipated timescales involved in policy document preparation, as a whole, would be helpful.	Timescales for planning policy document production are provided in the Local Development Scheme, which is published on the City Council website. It is difficult to give indicative timings for the various document types because they vary so much depending on the topic.

	The SCIP doesn't discuss the roles of Councillors (i) should they be encouraged to play an active part in area committees and neighbourhood forums so as to help the local community to articulate its views; (ii) should Councillors advise the most appropriate methods for public involvement for their wards and for the authority as a whole; (iii) should there be awareness training for elected members on the most frequently used consultation techniques, and particularly how to interpret the results? It would be interesting to know the extent to which Councillors have been involved in the preparation of the draft SCIP.	The SCIP encourages developers to inform ward councillors of developments in their wards at the pre-application stage, so that ward councillors can notify relevant local groups and actively encourage engagement in planning processes. Councillors will also be involved in agreeing the consultation programme for each policy document, because the SCIP includes a commitment for the authorising City Council body to agree a bespoke consultation programme for each new planning policy document. There is a Members code of practice, and Members are also offered regular training opportunities which often cover consultation-related issues (as referenced in the Action Plan). Members have been involved throughout the preparation of the SCIP, including CEB, scrutiny committee, and workshops.
	The reference to Sustainability Appraisals on page 9 should contain an explicit reference to air quality.	Sustainability Appraisals consider a wide range of issues so it would not be appropriate in this particular instance to start listing specific aspects of sustainability.
Neighbourhood Plan processes	The SCIP could say something about why the Neighbourhood Plan process has had a slow start in Oxford, what obstacles exist and what ways are recommended to overcome the obstacles?	Whilst the consultation elements of the neighbourhood planning process are discussed in the SCIP, it is not for the SCIP to comment on the progress to date of any of the emerging neighbourhood plans. The Annual Monitoring Report provides a general progress update instead, or there is information about each plan on the website.
	The diagram on page 10 is mostly a representation of a cascading process. If Neighbourhood Plans are to be successful in exercising powers under the Localism Act they must contribute to any Local Plan documents; their implementation, any revisions, and in the formulation of new plans. There needs to be an arrow upwards from the Neighbourhood Plans to the box containing the Local Plan documents.	The diagram has been updated.

Consultation undertaken by developers	More involvement with local residents at the pre-application stage.	The SCIP encourages developers to engage with the community at an early stage of major planning applications, especially pre-application stage.
	Wider advertising of pre app consultations, wider leafleting, information sessions etc.	There is no statutory requirement for developers to undertake pre-application consultation,however guidance has been produced alongside the SCIP (see the help sheets) which suggests ways that developers can effectively engage with the community, in particular ways to help people visualise what the proposal would look like.
	Consult all local residents/interested parties not just those in immediate vicinity.	If a scheme falls within the definition of a 'major' development, developers are encouraged to engage with those who live, work and/or undertake other activities in the surrounding area who may be affected by the proposals. It is difficult to set a specific distance or geographic area, because the engagement needs to be appropriate to the proposal and the areas that its likely to impact. An alternative, for interested parties, is to sign up to planningfinder, to receive automatic notifications of developments in your selected postcodes.
	Developers should be required to contact all local residents/amenity groups not just encouraged to do so.	
	Involve community through planning performance agreements.	Planning Performance Agreements are agreements between the City Council and the applicant, so it would not be appropriate to involve third parties. However the SCIP does set out that in some cases it may berequired as part of a Planning Performance Agreement (where applicable).
	Visual aids such as maps and models are a very good idea (e.g. Barton Park and Westgate) but most developers don't bother.	Alongside the SCIP, a help sheet has been produced to encourage developers to use visual aids, and sets out examples of different visual aids and best practice that they should consider using when undertaking consultations. Whilst we can't require them to be used, the SCIP encourages them.
	Developers should be required to minute meetings and respond to issues raised.	As there is no legal requirement for developers to undertake consultation in most cases we would be unable to enforce this. However, the SCIP encourages developers to submit a statement explaining how they have undertaken consultation and how they have responded to any issues raised in the final version of the design. This feedback could include minutes of meetings.

	Developers should ensure they are complying with building regulations when developing plans to avoid post-application changes	Building Regulations are outside of the remit of the SCIP, however we do advise applicants of the need to be compliant with the Regulations at an early stage.
Pre-application procedures	Pre-app advice should be given by a different officer to the one who decides on the application to increase transparency.	Applications are allocated to officers based on a number of factors including caseload and experience. Normally the same person who gives pre-application advice would be allocated to handle the application for consistency.
	Pre application transparency - let people know what has been advised during pre-app.	Pre-application advice is on a confidential basis. The applicant may wish to reference it in the application, but it cannot be required.
Consultations on planning applications	More engagement is needed with local people / engage with a wider range of people.	The SCIP encourages engagement with a range of people appropriate to the application. There is also an action in the Action Plan seeking to engage with a wider range of people that may not typically be heard in planning consultations.

	Re-instate letters to notify neighbouring properties	Great consideration has been given to whether the City Council should re-introduce sending neighbour notification letters inviting comments on new planning applications. Such an option may be welcomed by many residents however it is not without its costs and some risks. The cost of re-introducing such letters is estimated in the region of £45,000 per year, and even when the Council formerly operated this procedure it still attracted complaints because some neighbours expected the extent of notification to have been wider and because they thought they could only comment if they received a letter. The City Council is therefore looking to a range of mechanisms to consult neighbours and residents in close proximity to a proposed development. The planning service already makes extensive use of site notices, the web, and internet alerts such as PlanningFinder and the Council's weekly list of applications. The new Council 'App' will extend the options further and enable a more personal service to be accessed by local residents, landlords, and others. The SCIP also confirms that the opportunity remains to view paper plans at the main St Aldates Reception and to use public computers to access the web here and at public libraries.
	Inform local residents associations so they can inform local residents, planning notifications often missed.	There is an action in the Action Plan to explore how we can work with residents groups and other organisations, as a means of raising awareness about planning consultations, and encouraging people in that group, or their contacts, to get involved in planning decisions.
	More communication methods, not just online.	The City Council's commitment to continue to provide for those who find it difficult to access material online has been emphasised in the SCIP. This approach will also be encouraged of developers.
	Better consultation relating to revised plans and other changes during the application process.	Consultation on plans that are revised by the applicant mid-way through a planning application being determined will be done in a way that is proportionate to the changes proposed. In some cases re-advertisement (with pink site notices, instead of yellow ones) may be required if the changes impact significantly.

	Site notices – unreliable, not well posted, too few, not displayed for long enough, easily missed, easily removed, insufficient.	Standardised procedural guidance has been produced for officers putting up site notices (see Action Plan item). A summary of the guidance is also published on the website.
	Officer reports do not adequately reflect public comments (concerns are generalised and are therefore open to misinterpretation). This also means that committee members are not fully informed. Objections to applications are often all lumped together and dealt with by the bland statement that they can be mitigated by the imposition of suitable conditions. The 'conditions' listed are often not conditions at all (e.g. "Samples in Conservation Area"). We would like to see submitted comments listed in the report and a much clearer outline of the conditions imposed when recommending approval.	There is an action in the Action Plan to review how public comments are dealt with in committee reports, in response to comments that people say they are not clear. The review will be carried out over the next 12 months.
Planning application procedures	Consultation responses from Conservation Officers should be publically available.	The City Council's position on an application is drawn from a range of professional experts, including Conservation Officers, so it is appropriate to publish the combined views. This is also normal practice for local planning authorities.
	Public comments should be retained on the website after a decision has been made.	After an application has been decided, then public comments are classified as sensitive information, and therefore are removed from the website. This is standard practice in local planning authorities.
	Make the decision making process clear to all - applications can be called into committee if requested by four councillors, people should be aware of this.	The SCIP includes a summary of the planning application assessment process, but if further information would be helpful then it could be a topic for future help sheets. The Government website Planning Portal also explains the planning system overall, in a section aimed at the general public.http://www.planningportal.gov.uk/planning/planningsystem/

	Be clearer about what constitutes a 'major application'	The definition is determined by national policy, so a footnote has been added to explain that “At the time of writing, major applications are defined by Article 2 of the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure (England) Order 2015”. The Article can be viewed onlinehttp://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2015/595/article/2/made and includes criteria such as 10 or more dwellinghouses, a site area of greater than 0.5ha for new dwellings (or 1ha for other uses), or new floorspace of greater than 1000sqm. This is however subject to change, so to avoid the SCIP becoming out of date then the definition has not been repeated in the SCIP itself.
	Also highlight what is not a material consideration.	We have produced a help sheet on the website providing more detailed information on what is and is not a material consideration, to help people when commenting on planning applications. A link to this is now provided within the SCIP.
	Obtaining information about when applications are to be considered by committee is inefficient and unreliable. The City Council advise applicants but not those who submit comments. Even those answering the phone at the planning office may be unable to provide accurate information and advice. This situation is obviously unsatisfactory and distressing.	The dates of all committee meetings are published on the City Council website in the ‘Calendar of meetings’, and planning committee meetings tend to be scheduled 6-12 months in advance. Normal practice is then for the agenda to be published on the website at least 5 days in advance of the meeting. Sometimes if the case officer is still awaiting information up until the date the report needs to be published, then an application may need to be moved to a later planning committee date, but once the agenda is published then the applications to be considered at that committee date do not normally change. Officers answering telephone queries are therefore similarly advised to refer to the agenda on the website.

	Major applications can generate large numbers of documents. These need to be more clearly named online.	Noted, and training is being undertaken to ensure planning application documents which are uploaded by the City Council are clearly labelled. For planning applications that are submitted by the applicant via the Government's online ('oneapp') system, then the applicant generates the labelling but we are working to see how this can also be improved to make it easier for the public to find the documents that they are looking for, especially on major applications with many documents.
Planning appeals	Hearings/inquiries are held during working hours so are difficult to attend for some people.	Planning application hearings and inquiries are scheduled by the Planning inspectorate. This is beyond the control of the City Council. However to ensure that people are not disadvantaged, the planning inspector will normally permit written reps or a substitute representative if a required speaker is unable to attend the date/time.
	Where the Council's recommendation has been challenged, the Council's case should be prepared and presented by an independent planning consultant.	In the event that a planning application decision is appealed, then normally the case officer will continue to deal with the case. The exception to this is if the planning committee has disagreed with the planning officer's recommendation to such a degree that the case officer feels their professional integrity would be challenged to then defend such a change in position.
	The process works well enough (it uses postal communication!). We would like to have more clarification on how appeal decisions are taken into account when assessing later applications for a particular site. E.g. there has been an example in Quarry where a recommendation for approval for a planning application appears to contradict the principles established in a previous appeal decision refusing development for the same site.	A case officer will always consider the planning history of a site as part of the decision-making process, such as previous City Council decisions and any Planning Inspectorate or legal decisions, which may have established key principles. The decision may not necessarily follow the same path though if, for example, the proposal has changed significantly, or if the policy (national or local level) has changed significantly since the previous decision.

Online consultation systems	A number of comments were received relating to problems experienced when trying to use our online systemsfor consultations and viewing documents(PublicAccess, PlanningFinder, Inovem).	Alongside the SCIP an Action Plan sets out a number of ways that we are working to ensure that the IT systems which support engagement in planning are fit for purpose and user-friendly. As part of this we are looking into the specific issues that people referred to in their comments on the draft SCIP.
Helps sheets to support the SCIP	Help sheets and supplementary guidance are useful but there needs to be a more joined up approach which helps to guide users through the enormous amounts of information available. The OCC Heritage Portal is a good example of this.	Supporting online access to planning information is included in the Action Plan to improve navigation of the City Council web pages which are now reviewed at least 6 monthly, and more frequently where appropriate. This includes links to the Character Assessment Toolkit pages as well as other specialist pages. The City Council has also engaged user testing to improve the web pages.
	Provide links to the Oxford Character Assessment Toolkit which was developed as a community engagement tool for the City Council, developers & architects to use when considering development and to inform decisions about managing the environment.	
	These all seem good but we would like to see some documents updated in line with consultation responses.	The SCIP and supporting help sheets have been updated to take into account the consultation responses received, as explained in thisPublic Involvement Statement.
	Paper copies should always be provided too.	Tables 1 and 2 of the SCIP affirm our commitment to provide paper copies of policy consultation documents at appropriate deposit points in the city (such as libraries and St Aldate's Chambers). The SCIP also states the ways that we will make paper copies of planning applications available for inspection.
Suggested help sheet topics	A guide on what can and cannot be done at different stages of the planning process. Planning hearing/inquiry/examination processes/order of proceedings.	The SCIP includes a summary of the planning application assessment process, but if further information would be helpful then it could be a topic for future help sheets. Also the Action Plan includes an action to trial a newsletter, which could help to explain the planning processes too. The Government website Planning Portal also explains the planning system overall, in a section aimed at the general public.http://www.planningportal.gov.uk/planning/planningsystem/

	Contextual information plus more electronic visualisations.	A help sheet has been produced alongside the SCIP, to guide developers in ways of presenting information that will help members of the community to visualise development proposals.
View planning information at our main offices (St Aldate's Chambers or city libraries)	Viewing paper copies of plans is more difficult now that an appointment has to be made in advance. In the past a paper copy of every application was available in reception for public access.	It is no longer possible to make paper copies of every application available in reception due to practical space limitations. In addition, a significant number of applications are now submitted online. Therefore people are encouraged to view applications online via Public Access, either at home or using the computers in St Aldate's Chambers, however paper copies are still available to view upon request.
	Further attention should be given to the number, location and opening times of places described as deposit places.	A help sheet has been produced alongside the SCIP to list all of the deposit points. By publishing the list separately to the SCIP then it can easily be kept up to date if addresses, or opening times, of venues change.
	Also necessary is the ability to discuss plans with planning officers.	Appointments can be made to discuss plans with case officers upon request. In some cases a pre-application advice fee may apply.
	There is only a small area at the rear of St Aldate's Chambers where groups can view planning applications. Larger groups have to split up, with some using the smaller computers at the front. This means frequent visits across the office, causing disturbance and distraction. The small monitors at the front of St Aldate's Chambers do not enable proper appreciation of complex drawings. One of the three computers at the rear of St Aldate's Chambers was not working for several weeks, despite repeated reporting to staff. There are issues of equipment reliability and systems maintenance/fault rectification. The computer systems are unresponsive and slow. We have complained repeatedly of these failings but we have seen little sign of commitment to improvement.	This feedback has been noted and actions have already been taken, including adding an extra computer and larger screens in the public area. This is also identified in the Action Plan as an issue to keep under review, to ensure that the area is a customer-friendly option for people to view documents or make comments.

Engaging with a wider range of people from all across the city	Engage with more representative groups	The Action Plan includes an item to review how we work with representative groups, particularly in the context that such groups may help to reach wider audiences and to raise awareness of consultations and planning processes.
	Seek advice on this from outside sources such as Brookes business school, to try and receive some new, fresh innovative ideas. How about involving students from the universities? Good practice and worthwhile projects for them and hopefully good ideas/feedback for the City Council. Use the strength around you.	The Action Plan alongside the SCIP includes an action to explore working with existing networks and forums –which could include the universities where they have innovative experience of consultations. They could also potentially feed into the action in the Action Plan about setting up a reference group.
	A permanent display all current/upcoming developments in the Town Hall	Noted. This is being explored as something that could potentially be accommodated in the self service area at St Aldates's Chambers. It is also something that we hope publishing a regular newsletter will help to address.
	Newspaper ads expensive and misused. Contact more residents directly, local organisations, local publications, local TV/radio - youth groups and schools to engage children in planning developments in their patch.	The Regulations require that some types of planning application are advertised in local newspapers. In Oxford this is The Oxford Times newspaper. In addition we aim to use a range of different methods to reach as many people as possible, and the Action Plan includes an action to explore more use of social media to engage people.
	Involve neighbouring Parish Councils and residents from the District Council parishes sharing a boundary with the City.	Local authorities and parish councils adjoining an application site, or area covered by a policy document, will normally be consulted. We would also encourage those bodies to let their local residents know.
	Involve people in conjunction with Councillors: at the moment the public's perception is that the Councillors are merely go-betweens.	Ward councillors are notified of any application in their area, or policy document consultation. The SCIP also encourages applicants to engage with the relevant ward councillors so that they can help to raise awareness of the proposal locally in case people want to make comments. There is also regular training available for members if they want to engage more with the planning processes.

	Heavy reliance on online methods, even if someone wanted to visit a deposit point they have to find opening times etc. online! Local groups would be happy to provide additional deposit points outside library/office hours. The proposed and existing methods of communication rely substantially on the internet which excludes all those without access to, or ability to use, the internet. Arrangements should be made so that these people are not excluded.	The City Council is required to meet Regulatory requirements in terms of where and how documents are displayed, so if a document is not available as advertised then there is a risk that we could be subject to legal challenge. However this suggestion and offer of assistance could have benefits to availability and will be explored to better understand the legal implications of making documents available via alternatives to the regular deposit points.
	Identify who needs to be involved at what stage.	The SCIP introduces a new requirement for a bespoke consultation statement to be produced whenever the City Council embarks on a new planning policy document. This will set out who needs to be involved at each stage as appropriate to the issues under consideration.
	Think about how the Oxford Student Community Partnership Group can be used.	The Action Plan alongside the SCIP includes an action to explore working with existing networks and forums - such as the Oxford Student Community Partnership – to facilitate engagement with the planning process.
	Engage with key stakeholders/representative groups in advance of consultations to provide them with advance warning and to seek views on the most effective methods.	The SCIP encourages that consultation should start as early as possible to give people the opportunity to participate and contribute ideas. Particularly for policy documents, it also encourages more on-going dialogue and to shift away from only consulting key stakeholders/representative groups, so this will be one way that people have more advance notice of the direction that planning processes are heading. We will also be trialling a planning newsletter, to help to keep people updated in between formal consultation periods. The Action Plan also includes an action to explore setting up a user group for major consultation methods, to help shape future consultation events.

	City Council should carry out a rolling programme of education on planning process within local communities. This could involve annual half day workshops for interested residents in each part of the City. One was held in Highfield a few years ago and it was very well received. It would enable more effective participation.	The Action Plan alongside the SCIP notes the importance of building capacity and knowledge in communities, to engage effectively in planning processes, and this is an objective for several of the proposed actions. We will explore working with community groups, and also with colleagues in the City Council's regeneration areas, to review the best ways to achieve this. Its likely to be via a combination of methods depending on the target audience and their preferred way of engaging.
Resources for consultation	The new emphasis on community involvement will require substantial investment in building and deploying skills. A bigger effort made in the early planning stages will result in savings later on. Planners must avoid commitments to public engagement that can/will not be funded. The RTPI recommends that SCIPs should be costed and an estimated budget calculated for at least 3 years ahead. The current draft SCIP will need a lot more detail before costing can be accurate. Ways of undertaking collaborative work with the public could include: cost sharing with other departments; liaison with other departments undertaking consultation/public involvement to reduce duplication/overlaps (why was the Community Engagement Policy consultation and the SCIP consultation undertaken separately?) and Council departments and other agencies working together to build and maintain an accurate database of representative groups as part of a single stakeholder database.	The SCIP has taken account of the predicted budget available for the Planning service over the next few years.

Other comments relating to the SCIP	There should be stronger links between the SCIP and the Heritage Strategy to ensure a joined up process. The Heritage Plan and its commitment to an SPD should be included within the SCIP, as well as a commitment keep updated the Heritage Portal so that there can be no doubt that heritage is an integral part of planning and policy in Oxford and not a specialist area. We would like to see cross-reference made to the heritage plan framework and its role within the planning process.	The Action Plan includes an action to keep the web pages under regular review, so part of that will include ensuring better links across the pages for different planning topics, including linking in with the Heritage Strategy and Framework.
	Biodiversity, hydrology, flooding, Oxford's green setting, over-development by huge institutions - these are all issues where the planning policies are failing Oxford's residents. This draft document does not address these issues.	These issues are discussed in other policy documents. The SCIP covers consultation procedures and this comment seems to be referring to technical planning merits of decisions rather than the consultation processes.
	Highlight how the community can engage with other agencies such as Oxfordshire LEP.	The SCIP is produced by the City Council and sets out requirements related to City Council planning processes. It is not appropriate for the SCIP to make commitments on behalf of other organisations for their engagement with the public unless it relates to a planning application they have submitted.
	Hard copies of documents should be available free of charge on request so that non-computer literate people, often the elderly and less well-off, are not excluded.	Paper copies of policy consultation documents are made available at relevant deposit points throughout the city. Paper copies of planning applications are available to view at the City Council's main offices (St Aldate's Chambers).
	Embrace social media.	Ways to utilise social media in planning consultations will be explored over the next 12 months, as set out in the Action Plan.

Appendix D

Action Plan for Community Involvement in Planning

This Action Plan for Community Involvement in Planningsets out actions to support improvements in the quality, process and impact of engagement in planning processes.It is not intended to be an exhaustive list and will be kept under review.

The Action Plan is a supporting document for the Statement of Community Involvement (in Planning) (SCI(P)(2015), to set out the more detailed or specific actions that the Council is committed to in its aspirations for continuous improvement of community engagement in the planning process. In this way, the Action Plan clarifies how the Council is intending to deliver the SCIto address ideas and suggestions that were raised in the consultation responses.

The Action Plan illustrates, using practical examples, that the Council is committed to effective community engagement both now and in the longer term. The Action Plan also reflects that some changes are not achievable instantly but will take some time to resolve and/or decisions which impact more widely than the planning processes of the City Council, such as IT systems.

The actions are framed by four key principles for effective engagement in planning processes:

1. *Timely and sustained* – events and activities should start before any planning decisions are made and engagement should last throughout the planning process and beyond;
2. *Inclusive for all local people* – those living and working in an area have a right to be involved, all parties are welcome, and process must take account of peoples' varied needs;
3. *Two way, open and responsive* – communication should be discursive not prescriptive, so that information can be debated and ideas exchanged; and
4. *A matter of public record*– the processes must be documented and published[1].

The Action Plan will be reviewed periodically, and at least annually, to update on progress.

[1]Roger Dudman Way Review 2013, paragraph 91

Action Plan for Community Involvement in Planning

Effective engagement and customer service criteria	Community Involvement Actions	Targets or milestones	Progress / achievement (at July 2015)
Standardise the operating procedures for the planning authority (the City Council), for applicants, and for communities to use in engaging in planning issues. Standardising procedures helps transparency,and to set out clearly what people can expect from the City Council or applicant. It will also clarify what we will or won't be doing, and about what we expect from applicants.	**At Pre-application stage–standardise guidance for applicants** Prepare guidance for applicants about carrying out consultation as early as possible at pre-application For Major applications: Work with applicants to promote and agree tailored consultation plans, particularly focussing at the pre-application stage, taking into account latest best practice. Also encourage compliance to principles/standards, by formalising it within Planning Performance Agreements (PPA) where applicable. Guidance for applicants on visualisation techniques to help members of the community understand what a development will look like and how it will relate to its surroundings. Explore commissioning a 3D City-wide model, to aid visualisation in consultations. **Standardise post-application guidance (ie for live applications under consideration)**	Apply for external ISO9001 accreditation Autumn 2015. This involves preparing Standard Operating Procedures for key areas for independent assessment. Apply for external Customer Service Excellence (CSE) accreditation June 2015 because effective engagement is important part of customer service. Annually review SOPS and help sheets to see that they remain up-to-date.	Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) established and written for key work areas. Best practice guidance (guidance produced by RTPI and POS) about pre-application engagement is being promoted via the website. Application for CSE submitted and being assessed. Verification procedures being introduced for processing of planning applications eg officers taking photos of site notices to record the date, location, and presence of the notices. Publishing a summary of these procedures online. Guidance is being produced to encourage standardised processes eg: A Help sheet – 'Helping the community to understand development proposals' (published online). Also guidance is in progress - Improving the visual quality of drawings and documents submitted

Effective engagement and customer service criteria	Community Involvement Actions	Targets or milestones	Progress / achievement (at July 2015)
	Potential future help sheet topic: consultation checklists to prompt applicants on key matters to cover. Review verification procedures to provide reassurance to public whilst being proportionate and reasonable. Eg ways to verify that site notices have been displayed, in the event that they are removed or fall down. Review structure of Committee reports to clarify decision-making process, and also to provide clearer feedback to public about how comments have been taken into account. **Planning Policy** Standardise the approach to using the City Council's online consultation portal (eConsult/Inovem) for policy consultations, so that the public can get more familiar with the format and functions. **For both policy and applications** Continue to work with Public Involvement Board and the City Council Consultation Toolkit, to plan and implement effective		with a Planning Application: A guide for applicants and agents.

Effective engagement and customer service criteria	Community Involvement Actions	Targets or milestones	Progress / achievement (at July 2015)
	consultations to a consistent standard across the Council.		
Working with community forums/groups as a channel for hearing views and sharing information It is recognised that an effective way of engaging and reaching more people, is through representative groups and organisations across the City. Helps to develop insight about our customers and community groups, to better understand their needs and preferences for engaging with planning. Building capacity in the groups and communities, to improve skills and confidence to engage in planning process and to be more effective in influencing decisions made about their communities and quality of life. Build relationships and trust between the groups and the City Council, facilitating constructive dialogue and minimise consultation fatigue of repeated	Across the City there are existing groups which could play a role in facilitating community involvement in planning, and reaching a wider audience. Actions are therefore: a) Explore the existing groups/networks of interest, what interests they represent, and consider their potential roles in facilitating engagement. b) For willing groups, build relationships and explore best communication channels for more of an on-going dialogue (rather than at specific 'consultation' points) c) Explore setting up regular (electronic) newsletter for these groups and others who have expressed interest in engaging in planning process. d) Commitment also required from the groups, to act responsibly as a channel for views and to make themselves accessible to the City Council and applicants. Identify examples of best practice to promote. e) Groups have offered to help	Maintain an accurate and up-to-date database of representative groups and contact details for formal consultations. Check annually. Establish regular 6-monthly meeting with Localities team to improve engagement with the groups they work most closely with in the regeneration areas. Produce quarterly electronic newsletter (also see separate Action below about newsletter). Explore options for working with groups over next 12 months, including providing deposit points, then review.	On-going discussions with Localities Team about linking in with Community Partnerships, and effective ways to reach communities in the regeneration areas. Informal dialogue meetings held with OPT and OCS, to explore further some of the issues raised by them about consultation.

Effective engagement and customer service criteria	Community Involvement Actions	Targets or milestones	Progress / achievement (at July 2015)
consultations. Sharing and disseminating information about planning decisions, and more broadly about the planning process,will help to address comments about people not knowing how or when to engage, and generally raise awareness.	provide additional deposit points that could make documents accessible to people to view outside of library/office hours. Explore the legal implications of this.		
IT systems to support engagement Appropriate and reliable IT systems are essential for clear information-sharing from the Council, and for people to access documents to view or comment on. Also helps us to share documents and evidence, for increased transparency.	Set up regular review meetings with IT and with the Corporate Engagement Team, to highlight key issues and complaints raised by public regarding accessing planning consultation documents (especially planning applications). Regular review of planning pages on Council website to ensure easy to use, information is up to date and easy to locate. Identify opportunities to provide clearer links between different pieces of guidance and between planning policy and development management. Review public access to the computers in the public Self Service area at St Aldate's.	Establish regular quarterly review meetings with IT, including addressing the IT issues raised through the Statement of Community Involvement in Planning consultation and through other channels. Establish regular, at least 6-monthly,review of the planning webpages.	Regular reviews of the webpages are underway (at least quarterly). Last comprehensive review April 2015, and ad-hoc updates in between. Improved computer facilities arranged for public area at St Aldate's for people to view planning documents or submit comments electronically. Review underway of the corporate online consultation tool (Inovem) with the Corporate Engagement Team.
Efficient sharing of planning information, and documents	Set up regular review of mailing lists and those registered for notifications about	For planning policy: establish annual check of	SCI(P) consultation in January-February included asking people to

Effective engagement and customer service criteria	Community Involvement Actions	Targets or milestones	Progress / achievement (at July 2015)
for commenting on Clearer and more efficient information-sharing for people via electronic means (egwebsite, planningfinder notifications, or email).	planning policies, to check up to date contact information. Regularly check number of people/organisations using the planningfinder notification system for planning applications, and promote it as an easy way for people to self-service to keep updated about applications in their local area. Explore whether IT systems could support automatic electronic-updates about planning applications, to people that have made comments on those applications. Continue to promote electronic communication options when people contact us by written letter.	statutory consultees, Duty to Cooperate partners, and other stakeholders to check they are all on the consultation database and details are all up to date. For applications: Do an annual check of people/organisations registered on planningfinder tool. Target to increase the number of people registered on PlanningFinder. Monitor usage statistics for the planning webpage, at least 6 monthly, to inform reviews about layout and content.	confirm if they wanted to continue receiving letters about policy consultations, or whether they would like to switch to electronic.
Explore more effective use of social media to share information, and raise awareness amongst a wider audience Clear information sharing from the Council, and general awareness-raising about planning decisions, so that people can then choose whether they wish to engage in consultations.	Review best practice from elsewhere regarding, how social media might be used relevant to the specific nature of planning policy-making and decision-taking. Specific media to explore: twitter, videos, Council app. Explore use of the existing local Online Neighbourhood Discussion Forums as alternative channel for engaging with people.	Explore improving/extending the planning functions of the Council app, in phase 2 of the roll-out (2015-16) Trial tweeting on planning matters at least weekly. Explore options for increased use of social media over next 12	Discussions underway with corporate engagement team and IT about use of the City Council corporate social media accounts (twitter, youtube, facebook), and about future development phases of the planning functions on the City Council 'app' for mobile phones which was launched in 2015. Trialling 'tweeting' on planning

Effective engagement and customer service criteria	Community Involvement Actions	Targets or milestones	Progress / achievement (at July 2015)
Shows that we are changing practices and seeking to engage in a manner which is more relevant to many people now and in the future. Will help us to provide our customers with the information they need, in ways which meet their needs and preferences, using a variety of appropriate channels. Will help to make our services easily accessible to all customers through provision of a range of alternative channels.	Explore use of video / audio versions of presentations e.g. a case officer explaining an application, or a copy of presentations given at consultation events, for those that can't attend events in person, and to offer more interaction than just consultation documents online. Could also potentially be used by applicants as part of their consultations	months,then review.	topics, eg about the Planning Advice Duty Officer drop-in facility for people who wish to come in and ask a planning officer questions about an application, and about commencement of major development sites (e.g. Barton).
Reaching a wider audience and 'hearing the seldom heard' Monitoring shows that the people or groups responding to planning consultations are often skewed towards more affluent parts of the city, and certain sectors of the population. It would be desirable to encourage more equal access to and engagement with the planning process, and to make consultation more inclusive and involve representatives of groups of the population who are	Explore working with existing neighbourhood/area forums, or other representatives of different groups, as a means to facilitate engagement. Also explore working with institutions such as schools and further education colleges to build up a regular working relationship. Implement a programme of training for staff to raise awareness about communication needs of equalities groups. Develop better understanding of the needs and preferences of equalities groups in terms of engaging in planning decisions, and then develop services to	Explore working with groups relevant to the topic or geographical area of the subject matter or application (not yet known). Review in 12 months.	Staff training undertaken at Away Days and lunchtime seminars, about equalities groups.

Effective engagement and customer service criteria	Community Involvement Actions	Targets or milestones	Progress / achievement (at July 2015)
currently rarely involved in planning decisions. This may also involve capacity-building, particularly those who are less experienced or less confident in responding to consultations. Groups to target for involvement may include under-represented social groups such as youth groups, religious groups, mums, or specific interest groups such as organisations which represent disabled people, young or elderly people, or ethnic minority communities.	respond to those needs.		
Undertake reviews and use feedback mechanisms to learn from our experiences, and from best practice in other authorities Reviewsand learning from our experiences, helps to improve the range, content and quality of verbal, published and web based information we provide to ensure it is relevant and meets the needs of customers.	Undertake staff reviews of processes after each major public consultation on planning matters, including working with the Public Involvement Board. Benchmark what we do against best practice elsewhere, including direct contact with other local authorities or through POS groups, PAS events, and monitoring research by the two universities. Explore training or accreditations that could be sought by individual officers,	Staff review of consultation to follow each major Council-led consultation (as and when consultations occur). Improve ways that customers can feedback on customer service, by adding survey link to email signatures. Carry out bi-annual departmental customer	General discussion at DMUG about SCI and consultation. Review of best practice in what local authorities require from applicants in terms of consultation, undertaken to inform drafting of SCI. Also review of best practice in visualisation tools undertaken to inform the help sheets, published on the website. On-going monitoring of the potential legal

Effective engagement and customer service criteria	Community Involvement Actions	Targets or milestones	Progress / achievement (at July 2015)
Benchmarking against other organisations, and learning from best practice within the organisation or elsewhere, helps to improve service. Reviews give an opportunity to identify any dips in performance against our standards, together with action we are taking to put things right and prevent further reoccurrence. Regular review of our strategies for consulting and engaging helps to ensure that methods used are effective, and provide reliable and representative results, as well as better customer satisfaction.	teams or the whole service for engagement techniques. Explore support available from PAS to trial processes as best practice examples	satisfaction survey (one due in 2015).	position/enforceability of proposed measures in other local authorities, to inform decisions about whether they are transferrable to Oxford context. Email signatures being updated to include link to customer feedback form.
Effective roles for elected members Local ward members can be an additional channel to help deliver clearer information sharing from the Council, and general awareness-raising about planning decisions, to local people.	Work with City Council members to explore opportunities for raising awareness of consultations and forthcoming planning decisions. Explore ways to ensure they are kept informed about significant planning issues in their areas and so are able to help facilitate two-way dialogue with their constituents' within the Code of Practice. Explore whether IT systems could help to automatically notify ward members about planning applications in their area.	Training for members including topics about getting involved in planning, and getting their ward residents involved, to be delivered either as topics arise or at least annually.	Member Planning training sessions in May 2015 incorporated community engagement issues, and sessions were well attended.

Effective engagement and customer service criteria	Community Involvement Actions	Targets or milestones	Progress / achievement (at July 2015)
Regular electronic Planning Update Newsletter Regular communication via a newsletter could have several benefits by encouraging more continuous information sharing with internal and external customers rather than just at specific consultation points. It will help with clearer information sharing about emerging policies and progress on decisions, so that people can engage more effectively at the appropriate times. Regular feedback can help to develop relationships local groups eg we can use the newsletter to demonstrate how public and stakeholder views have been taken into account in previous engagement exercises. People will be clearer about what consultation will be taking place and when as we can use the newsletter as a further channel to publicise and give advance notice.	Explore producing a regular Planning Update newsletter to be circulated electronically and also published on the website.	Produce at least quarterly an electronic newsletter to send to: all those registered on Inovem database, all councillors, DMUG and others as appropriate. Review in 12 months to decide if effective means of communication, and feedback from users about the content.	Aim to publish first edition in July/August 215.

Effective engagement and customer service criteria	Community Involvement Actions	Targets or milestones	Progress / achievement (at July 2015)
Establish a reference group/user group for major consultation events Involving customers in the setting, reviewing and raising of our local standards/delivery standards, will help us to deliver good customer service by helping in evaluating how customers interact with planning and to use this information to identify possible service improvements and offer better choices. Also the review process helps to improve the range, content and quality of verbal, published and web based information we provide to ensure it is relevant and meets the needs of customers.	Explore setting up a user group/review panel (approx 4-6 people) to review major consultation events run by the City Council, and to get insight into people's experiences of engaging. Learning will also then help to shape future consultation events eg. Seek feedback about location and venues, and consultation materials.	Establish parameters for possible group: terms of reference, scope of membership and issues discussed.	Not yet started
Supporting best practice in applicant-led consultations Pre-application engagement by applicants is a key part of the planning application process so it is important to keep this under regular review and to promote innovation and best practice.	Work through DMUG and other channels, to encourage earlier engagement on majors and to take applications where appropriate through the ODRP process. Publicise case studies of best practice that demonstrate what can be achieved in Oxford and set the benchmark for future. Monitor the quality of applicant-led	Monitor as examples become available and then review annually. Report a sample of examples in the AMR (annually)	Monitoring and review of examples of current major applications is underway.

Effective engagement and customer service criteria	Community Involvement Actions	Targets or milestones	Progress / achievement (at July 2015)
	consultation on major applications: - monitor the statements of community involvement submitted with planning applications in terms of range/type of pre-application consultation undertaken, and how it has influenced the application proposals - work with case officers to ensure reports also clearly report consultation that has shaped the proposal.		

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Appendix Ei
Overview of the key stages in the Neighbourhood Development Plan Process

	STAGE 1	STAGE 2	STAGE 3	STAGE 4	STAGE 5	STAGE 6	STAGE 7	STAGE 8	STAGE 9	STAGE 10	STAGE 11	STAGE 12
	Designating a neighbourhood area	Designating a neighbourhood forum	Evidence gathering and early public consultation	Pre-submission consultation on detailed proposals for a neighbourhood development plan	Submission and publicising proposed neighbourhood development plan	Check submitted neighbourhood development plan is legally compliant	Appointment of independent examiner	Submission of neighbourhood development plan to examination	Consideration of examiner's views (if changes are recommended)	Referendum	Adoption	Publicise the neighbourhood development plan
Neighbourhood Planning Group	Submits background information required by the regulations to the City Council and requests designation.	Submits background information required by the regulations to the City Council and requests designation.	Gathers evidence. Decides on the best way to consult local residents and businesses. Considers the need for SEA/HRA.	Detailed proposals (usually a draft plan) must be publicised for six weeks. A copy should also be sent to the City Council.	Submits to City Council: Map or statement identifying the plan area. Consultation statement. Proposed plan. Statement explaining compliance with statutory requirements.	No action required.	No action required.	No action required.	No action required.	No action required.	No action required.	No action required.
City Council	Checks application. Publicises application for 6 weeks and invites comments. May formally designate a neighbourhood area.	Checks application. Publicises application for 6 weeks and invites comments. May formally designate a neighbourhood forum.	No statutory function. Can respond to requests for advice on consultation methods, evidence, and policy. Carries out SEA / HRA screening.	No statutory function.	Publicises any plan that inlcudes all the required documents as soon as possible for at least six weeks and invites comments. Notifies statutory consultees.	Checks that the draft plan meets the requirements set out in legislation and the regulations.	Responsible for appointing an idenpendent examiner.	Sends plan documents, HRA (if required) and copies of all the comments received at Stage 5 to the independent examiner.	Checks plan meets basic conditions. Considers the examiner's views and decides whether to make any changes. Publishes decision statement.	Organises a referendum (covering the relevant geographical area) for any plan that is still proceeding.	The City Council is required to adopt any plan where the majority of people who voted were in support of it. The plan will be taken to Full Council for adoption.	Publicises the adopted neighbourhood development plan and makes it available for viewing.

Please note: This help sheet provides an overview only. Please see the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012 for the detailed requirements at each stage.

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Overview ofInvolvement and Communication Methods

This help sheet provides an overview of the main methods of community involvement/communication and how they will be used by the City Council as part of the planning process. Applicants considering undertaking major or other significant development should consider some of these methods for engaging with the community. This information may also be useful to Neighbourhood Forums as they consider engaging with local people and businesses as part of the Neighbourhood Development Plan process.

Method of Involvement or Communication	Advantages	Disadvantages	How the City Council uses this method
Electronic			
Website (www.oxford.gov.uk)	Able to share a wide range of detailed information with a large audience. Is often more accessible to some hard-to-reach groups (e.g. younger people). Information is available at any time. Resource efficient.	Excludes those without access to the internet. Technical problems could hinder access to information. Information can be hard to access if there is too much or it is not well structured/displayed.	The website is the main way that we share information. We currently: ▪ Make sure that the relevantwebpages are kept up to dateon the progress of planning policy document production (including providing copies of evidence and consultation reports); and ▪ Ensure that information on current planning applications is made available through the electronic publication of the weekly list and via 'Public Access' (see below).
Public Access (Online system for viewing and commenting on planning applications. Accessed via our website.)	Enables people to access a wide range of information relating to planning applications and appeals. Comments are instantly received. Resource efficient.	Excludes those without access to the internet. Technical problems could hinder access to information /submission of comments.	Public Access is currently the main way that we share information about planning applications. People who do not have access to the internet at home are able to use the computers at our offices in St. Aldate's Chambers or city libraries during opening hours.
QR Codes (Barcode like symbols that can be scanned by a compatible smartphone or tablet that then takes users through to a specific webpage.)	Enables quick and easy access to detailed information on the move. Is often more accessible to some hard-to-reach groups (e.g. younger people).	Excludes those without compatible smartphones or tabletswith the necessary app. Smartphone and tablet screens may be too small to view detailed plans and documents properly.	QR codes are currently used on site notices. When scanned, they take users through to the Public Access page on our website where they can view planning application information and submit comments.
Consultee Access (System for notifying local interest groups and other organisations of planning applications within a specified area. Comments can also be submitted via this system.)	Allows groups to more easilymanage their consultation responses. Resource efficient.	Excludes those without access to the internet. Technical problems could hinder access to information or the submission of comments.Operated by third party provider - limited control of service/ technical issues.	Consultee Access is a service that we currently offer to local interest groups and other organisations in addition to Public Access.
Planning Finder (Planning application notification system. Registration via our website. Uses postcode data to notify users of planning applications they may be interested in.)	People can specify multiple areas that they are interested in. If they 'flag' an application they will also be notified when the application has been determined.Resource efficient.	Excludes those without access to the internet. Technical problems could hinder access to information /submission of comments. Operated by third party provider - limited control overquality of service/ technical issues.	Planning Finder is not the Council's main consultation method for planning applications. However, it provides a useful tool for members of the community to keep up-to-date on planning applications in specific areas.
Email	Direct contact with specific individuals. Minimal delay between email being sent and being received. Resource efficient.	Can only contact those people who have provided their email addresses specifically for this purpose. Email addresses/contacts may change over time meaning that the database can easily become out of date.	We normally use emails in the following situations: ▪ To inform statutory consultees of relevant planning policy and planning application consultations ▪ To inform councillors of planning applications and appeals (by emailing weekly lists). ▪ To provide updates to people who have specifically registered their interest in the progress ofplanning policy document production.
Facebook (Online social network)	Able to share information with a large audience. Is often more accessible to some hard-to-reach groups.Resource efficient.	Excludes those without access to the internet.Could generate online comments and debates rather than formal consultation responses which may be hard to manage, monitor and assess.	The Council's Facebook account may be used as an additional means of notifying people when consultation periods start and close for planning policy documents and major/significant planning applications and appeals.

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Twitter (Online social network)	Able to share information with a large audience. Is often more accessible to some hard-to-reach groups.Resource efficient.	Excludes those without access to the internet.Could generate online comments and debates rather than formal consultation responses which may be hard to manage, monitor and assess.	The Council's Twitter account may be used as an additional means of notifying people when consultation periods start and close for planning policy documents and major/significant planning applications and appeals.
Online Consultation Portal (Online system available via our website where people can register to receive alerts when consultations are being undertaken and/or complete a questionnaire/survey.)	Sends automatic email alerts to registered users to let them know about new consultations. People can manage their own profiles/settings. Consultations responses are automatically input into a database. Resource efficient.	Excludes those without access to the internet.Only notifies people who have registered with the system and who have said that they are interested in planning and regeneration.	The online consultation portal is currently used for the majority of planning policy consultations to allow people to view consultation documents and to make comments via an online questionnaire.
Printed			
Site Notices	Provides notice of development proposals in the area most likely to be affected. Resource efficient.	May be damaged or removed. May not be seen or be ignored. May be less accessible to some hard-to-reach groups (e.g. people who are housebound due to illness or disabilities).	Site notices displayedon and/or near the site will be the main way that we notify people of planning applications. Site notices will be printed on yellow card to increase their visibility and laminated to protect them from rain. Notices for amended schemes will be printed on pink card so that they can be differentiated from the original notice. Notices will be displayed at least 21 days before the consultation closes in line with statutory requirements.
Paper copies of documents	Accessible to those without access to the internet or who are unable to use computers. Enables large plans to be viewed more easily.	Locations may be inaccessible to some (e.g. people who are housebound due to illness or disabilities). Opportunities to view documents islimited by opening hours.	We currently: ▪ Make sure that paper copies of planning policy consultation documents are available to view at our offices in St. Aldate's Chambers and city libraries during their opening hours; ▪ Make paper copies of major planning applications available to view at our offices in St Aldate's Chambers during opening hours; ▪ Make paper copies of other types of planning application available at our offices during opening hours upon request.
Letters (Printed letters sent via the post.)	Easy to target people in a specific area. Letters can be sent directly to all properties. Is often more accessible to some hard-to-reach groups (e.g. housebound, disabled and frail elderly people).	Delay between letters being produced and being received. Where properties are rented, the letters may not be seen by the property owner. Not environmentally friendly. Postage and printing costs.	We will not normally use letters to notify people of planning policy or planning application consultations. Letters will only be used be in the following situations: ▪ To notify statutory consultees of planning policy and planning application consultations where we do not have email addresses. ▪ To notify people of planning appeals. (Letters will be sent to adjoining properties and all those who commented on the original planning application.)
Leaflets	Easy to target people in a specific area. Leaflets can be delivered directly to all properties.Is often more accessible to some hard-to-reach groups (e.g. housebound and frail elderly people).	Delivery can be highly resource intensive. Limited information can be given (summary only). Where properties are rented, the information may not be seen by the property owner.	Leaflets may be used for planning policy consultations where we need to target a specific geographical area of the City.
Paper response forms / questionnaires	Accessible to those without access to the internet or who are unable to use computers.	Locations may be inaccessible to some (e.g. people who are housebound due to illness or disabilities). Access limited by opening hours.	For planning policy consultations, we will make sure that paper copies of response forms/questionnaires areavailableat our offices in St Aldate's Chambers and city libraries during opening hours. A printable version of the response form/questionnaire will also be made available on our website.
Posters	Can be used to highlight key information and events. Poster locations can be chosen to target a wide range of people. Publicity 'in the community'(local libraries, shopping centres, sports centrescommunity centres and community noticeboards).	Can be easily dismissed or overlooked. Information provided is limited.	Posters may be used for planning policy consultations where we need to target a specific geographical area of the City.

Newspaper advertisements Newspaper advertisements may take two forms: i) Statutory notices ii) Press releases	Potential to reach a large number of people to raise awareness of plans, proposals, and consultations/opportunities to get involved.	Public notices may be overlooked. Information provided is limited. Expensive.	Statutory Notices We currently advertise the following types of planning application in the Oxford Times: major applications, listed building applications, developments in a conservation area, developments in the Green Belt, EIA development, City Council applications and departures from the development plan. Planning policy consultations will only be advertised through a statutory notice in the local press when required by the regulations (in most cases, this is no longer required). Press Releases We will usually issue a press release to share key information about planning policy document production (such as consultations, examinations and adoption). We may also issue press releases to advertise consultations and progress on significant development and regeneration projects. We also notify the local press (Oxford Times and Oxford Mail) of all planning appeals.
Public exhibitions (unstaffed)	Able topresent information in interesting and easily-accessible manner. Focused attention on specific project(s). Resource efficient. Locations can be targeted to reach people most likely to be affected by development proposals (e.g. those in specific areas of the city).	No opportunity to clarify issues or receive feedback directly. Can be missed if not well publicised in advance.	We may hold unstaffed public exhibitions relating to planning policy consultations to raise people's awareness of key issues and to encourage people to look at the consultation documents online/at deposit points. We may also do this for major / significant planning applications.
Verbal / Face-to-Face			
Telephone	Provides an opportunity to explain/clarify issues and answer queries. Is often more accessible to some hard-to-reach groups (e.g.disabled, frail older people and those with literacy difficulties).	Resource intensive. Does not reach a wide audience.	Comments on planning applications and planning policy documents must be formally made in writing and therefore telephone conversations are not one of the main ways that we would usually consult members of the public. However, the City Council's telephone number is widely available and officers will discuss cases with members of the public if they call as part of our commitment to provide excellent customer service.
Public exhibitions (staffed)	Able to present a lot of information. Focused attention on specific project(s). Opportunities to clarify and discuss issues and to receive feedback. Locations can be targeted to reach people most likely to be affected by development proposals (e.g. those in specific areas of the city).	Resource intensive (staff time, cost of producing exhibition materials, venue hire, etc). Time limited. Can be missed if not well publicised in advance.	We may hold staffed public exhibitions as part of our consultations on Planning policy documentsto raise people's awareness of key issues and provide an opportunity to discuss those issues with City Council officers. We may also do this for major / significant planning applications.
Structured Public Workshops	Public workshops can generate ideas, improve understanding and develop 'ownership' of proposals.Participantsget to hear each other's perspectives during the discussion.	Resource intensive (requires significant preparation, staff time, venue hire, etc.). Relies on people being available at the specified date/time.	We may use workshops in consultations on policy documents to facilitate discussion and gather different perspectives on emerging policies.
Public meetings	Means of sharing information with a wide audience. More efficient if part of a pre-arranged meeting (for example visits to Parish Council or Neighbourhood Forum meetings).	Potential to be dominated by an un-representative minority. Others may be intimidated so not all views may get heard or put across. Resource intensive. Relies on people being available at the specified time/date.	We may try to reach community groups through existing forums dealing with local issues when undertaking consultations on planning policies.This option may be considered for exceptional, significant schemes but is not normally used as a preferred method of consultation.
One-to-one meetings with selected stakeholders	Useful means of identifying key issues and involving specialist organisations.	Resource intensive.	Planning policy documentsoftenrequire on-going informal dialogue, such as with statutory consultees, key delivery partners and neighbouring local authorities under the 'duty to cooperate'. This may take the form of one-to-one meetings.

Steering/advisory group	A way to get key organisations involved in overseeing or acting as a sounding board for the production of planning policy documents. Particularly appropriate for area action plans or topic- based policies. The role of the group needs to be clear (via terms of reference) and there should be a transparent approach to selecting members.	Resource intensive.	Steering groups may be used in overseeing the preparation of technical studies and emerging policies, for example to test key assumptions or methodology, in planning policy.
Radio	Can reach a wide representation of the community and raise the profile of plans and proposals.	Expensive. Time consuming to produce. May only reach some social groups.	Not normally used as a method of informing people about consultations, however this option may be considered for exceptional, significant schemes.

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Appendix F

Summary of Oxford City Council's procedure for displaying site notices for planning applications

This note summarises the procedures that officers follow when dealing with planning applications, so that members of the public can be clear about what site notices they can expect to see, where, and when.

Statutory Requirements

To fulfil its obligations under Article 13 of the Town & Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2010, the City Council must display **at least one site notice** on or near each application site for no less than 21 days.

When will we put up site notices?

We aim to display site notices usually within one week of a planning application being received and validated. We will always allow at least 21 days to submit comments from the date a site notice is first displayed.

Where will site notices be displayed?

Site notices must be displayed '*in at least one place on or near the land to which the application relates*'[1].

The most obvious location to display a site notice is on any gatepost, fencing, or railings to the front of the application site. If this is not possible, then the site notice will normally be attached to the nearest lamp post, street sign, or telegraph pole. Where it is not possible to display a site notice in any of these locations, the notice will be displayed on the front window(s) or door of the application site.

If the development proposed would be located to the rear or side of a site or is a corner plot and could have an impact on properties located on a different road, another site notice will be displayed on the other road(s) in question.

How many notices will be displayed?

The number of site notices displayed will depend on the scale and location of the proposed development. Whilst the Regulations require at least one site notice to be displayed, additional notices may be required for corner plots and developments to the side or rear of a site (as described above). Additional site notices will also be displayed for large scale development proposals.

What information will be on the notice?

[1] in accordance with paragraph (5)(a) of Article 13 of The Town & Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2010

The following information will be included on site notices:

- a description of the proposed development and site address
- where you can view the application
- how you can submit comments and the deadline for doing this.

What do different colour site notices mean?

Site notices for new planning applications will normally be printed on YELLOW card. This is to ensure that they stand out and are noticeable.

If we receive amended plans or additional significant information during the application process, we may display further site notices to advertise these changes if they are significant and provide an additional 14 day consultation period.To alert people to the fact that the notice is advertising new information we will use a PINK site notice.

What if the site notice is removed or damaged?

Sometimes a site notice may be removed before the 21 day consultation period ends, without the knowledge of the City Council. Article 13 of the Town & Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2010 states:

> *Where the notice is, without any fault or intention of the local planning authority, removed, obscured or defaced before the period of 21 days has elapsed, the authority shall be treated as having complied with the requirements if they have taken reasonable steps for protection of the notice and, if need be, its replacement.*

Site notices are laminated to provide protection against rain and are secured by strong, waterproof cable ties, to reduce risk of them being removed unintentionally. When a site notice is displayed, photographs are taken and are kept on file to show that the City Council has met these requirements.

How and when will the site notice be taken down?

When we register a planning application, we ask the applicant to remove the site notice at the end of the 21 day consultation period. However, this will not be possible in all cases. Planning officers aresupplied with tape cutters so that they can remove expired site notices if they come across themwhilst undertaking site visits.

Any further questions?

If you would any further information on our site notice procedure, please contact us using the details below:

planning@oxford.gov.uk

01865 249811

Planning & Regulatory Services, Oxford City Council,
St. Aldate's Chambers, 109-113 St. Aldate's, Oxford, OX1 1DS

Appendix G

Encouraging Developer-led Community Engagement in planning applications: Comparison of approaches taken by other authorities

Statutory requirements and national guidance

There is no statutory requirement for developers to undertake pre-application consultation. However, there is clear support for early community engagement in the National Planning Policy Framework, as Paragraph 66 states: *"Applicants will be expected to work closely with those directly affected by their proposals to evolve designs that take account of the views of the community. Proposals that can demonstrate this in developing the design of the new development should be looked on more favourably".* This is support is then echoed in the National Planning Practice Guidance.

It should be noted that the Planning Portal, which provides guidance on preparing and submitting planning applications, has no current guidance or information on community involvement.

Reason for research

This document summarises a review undertaken to look at the approaches of other local planning authorities in terms of their requirements or guidance provided for developers to engage with communities at either the pre-application or application stages. The research was undertaken in order to help us understand the different approaches available and to enable us to benchmark our approach against other authorities to help ensure that we are delivering high standards of engagement.

It should be noted that the research was based on publically-available information obtained from the authorities' websites only, on the basis that the website would be the most likely initial source of information that developers would look to prior to any pre-application meeting.

In undertaking this research, we looked at broadly comparable planning authorities (small-medium city-based authorities). The table below summarises our findings and identifies where there may be lessons we could learn. Bristol provides some particularly interesting ideas for developer-ledengagement, although it should be noted that some of the proposals are only in draft form and further monitoring would need to be undertaken to establish how the requirements stand up to challenge at appeal or legal cases.

Summary of findings about the approaches of other planning authorities

Local planning authority	Any clear requirements or guidance for developer-ledcommunity engagement set out on the website?	Other relevant information
Bath and North East Somerset	No specific pre-app consultation requirements or guidance relating to community engagement.	
Brighton & Hove City Council (unitary)	Pre-application advice sometimes includesguidance for developers onundertaking community engagement.No specific requirements for developers, broad 'recommendations' only. Sources of Information: http://www.brighton-hove.gov.uk/content/planning/planning-applications/pre-application-advice http://www.brighton-hove.gov.uk/content/planning/planning-applications/pre-application-advice-service-small-scale-applications	
Bristol City Council	A Community Involvement Statement must be submitted with **all**major planning applications. (It is a validation requirement.) It is thereforeclearly expected that developers involve the local community at the pre-application stage. Furthermore the Community Involvement Statement must be signed by both the applicant and community if agreed (each can submit their own statement if not agreed). Guidance about how to do a Community Involvement Statement:http://www.bristol.gov.uk/sites/default/files/documents/planning_and_building_regulations/planning_applications_and_process/Guidelines%20for%20Pre%20application%20involvement%20-%20update%20Jan%202015.pdf Template Community Involvement Statement: http://www.bristol.gov.uk/sites/default/files/documents/planning_and_building_regulations/planning_applications_and_process/2011-community-involvement-record-cis_0.doc	Website says their SCI currently being updated too, so might be interesting to see how changes. http://www.bristol.gov.uk/page/planning-and-building-regulations/planning-statement-community-involvement

	Provides a guidance notefor developers on community involvement in the pre-application process. Bristol also has a 'Neighbourhood Planning Network' which is a self-help network of independent, voluntary neighbourhood groups who want to be involved in planning in the city. The network acts as a conduit for early developer discussions with the community. Bristol City Council has also additionally set up 14 Neighbourhood Partnerships which aim to involve local people in decision making.	
Cambridge City Council	Consultation not specifically mentioned on the planning applicationhomepage. The only advice on developer-led community engagementseems to becontained within a pdf download on pre-applicationadvice in general, and is very brief: ***3. Community Involvement*** *We encourage community involvement in the planning process at an early stage, before an application is submitted. This may take the form of discussions with neighbours, a local exhibition, public meeting, circulation of leaflets, or the creation of a well-publicised dedicated website, including a facility to make comments.* *The case officer can advise you of community groups that are likely to have an interest in the proposal. Third party comments should be considered before formalising a proposal and any application, which has undertaken pre application consultation with a community group, should set out the details of the consultation process and how the application has responded.* Source of Information: https://www.cambridge.gov.uk/sites/www.cambridge.gov.uk/files/documents/pre-application-advice-guidance-ed.pdf	

Camden Council	Encourage pre-application engagement through an offer to facilitate public meetings for local residents through DM forums to allow applicants to present their proposals as part of the pre-app process. https://www.camden.gov.uk/ccm/navigation/environment/planning-and-built-environment/planning-applications/;jsessionid=DC39807B626CBC45CD4A271F668F2801 and http://www.camden.gov.uk/ccm/content/environment/planning-and-built-environment/two/major-developments/development-management-forum.en Also facilitate 'Developers' briefings' for applicants to explain to members at early stage https://www.camden.gov.uk/ccm/content/environment/planning-and-built-environment/two/planning-applications/before-you-apply/developers-briefings/	
Reading Borough Council (unitary)	No specific pre-application consultation requirements or guidance for developers on the website.	
York City Council	No specific pre-app consultation requirements or guidance for developers on the website. Source of Information: http://www.york.gov.uk/info/200388/planning_applications/343/viewing_and_commenting_on_a_planning_application	

Authorities with no specific mention of developer-led community engagement on their websites during thisresearch

Bath and North East Somerset Council:http://www.bathnes.gov.uk/services/planning-and-building-control/apply-planning-permission
Birmingham City Council: http://www.birmingham.gov.uk/cs/Satellite/preappadvice?packedargs=website%3D4&rendermode=live
Haringey Council: http://www.haringey.gov.uk/housing-and-planning/planning/planning-applications/how-make-planning-application
Reading Borough Council:http://beta.reading.gov.uk/planningadvice
City of York Council:http://www.york.gov.uk/info/200388/planning_applications/343/viewing_and_commenting_on_a_planning_application

Conclusions and lessons learnt

In general, it was found that many authorities do not seem to have any published information on their websites that mentions community involvement at the pre-application stage. Oxford's strong encouragement of pre-application engagement by developers, and the provision of detailed guidance, means that we are already ahead of many other authorities in this respect.

Some authorities dohave a general reference to pre-application consultations in their Design & Access Statement guidance, but this tends to be fairly vague, leaving it entirely up to the developer if they wish to engage with the community or not. For example, one authority's guidance states: "*state what, if any, consultation has been undertaken on issues relating to access to the development and what account has been taken of the outcome of any such consultation"* [emphasis added].

From the examples of good practice that were identified, the following lessons can be learnt:

Pre-application guidance

- Our approach of strongly encouraging developers to undertake community engagement at the pre-application stage needs to be embedded in our pre-application guidance, including the text on our website. Our pre-application webpage already highlights the importance of community engagement (second paragraph), and links to guidance on how to help the community understand development proposals, and this already goes further than many other authorities. However, we could improve this by adding a link to the Statement of Community of Involvement on this page to emphasise this responsibility and to clarify our policy.
- We could also prepare a more general note about 'community involvement in the pre-application process' to spell out the benefits of early community engagement and the need for a developer to explain not only what consultation they have undertaken, but also how this has influenced their proposals. Bristol note is good example http://www.bristol.gov.uk/sites/default/files/documents/planning_and_building_regulations/planning_applications_and_process/Community%20involvement%20in%20the%20pre%20application%20process.pdf
- We could also add a paragraph targeted at the community 'what to do if you want to get involved at pre-app stage'

A greater role for community groups

Bristol council set up Neighbourhood Partnerships as a channel for views. We already have (online) Neighbourhood Discussion Forums – need to look into whether these could do a similar role, and whether we should be promoting them more to developers. Also note that currently they don't cover the whole city, only Central south/west, Headington/marston, or Cowley.
http://www.oxford.gov.uk/PageRender/decN/Neighbourhood_Discussion_Forums_occw.htm . We also have Area Forums
http://www.oxford.gov.uk/PageRender/decCD/Area_Committees_occw.htm but unclear

how these relate to NDFs and what the different roles are, or which would be most useful for applicants to engage with.

On similar lines Camden facilitates forums for developers to bring pre-app schemes to local community for discussion, but this seems to be more authority-led (with implied resource implications).

www.oxford.gov.uk

OXFORD CITY COUNCIL

Combatting inequality

Is Oxford City Council doing all it can to make Oxford a fairer, more equal place?

Report of the Inequality Panel

Commissioned by Oxford City Council's Scrutiny Committee

June 2015

Foreword by the Chair of the Inequality Panel

These are difficult times. Reduced funding and increased poverty and social deprivation make it more and more difficult for councils to provide basic services needed by a growing number of vulnerable people in our communities.

Funding pressures are continuing. A seismic shift needs to happen. This requires ambition matched by innovation, led with political commitment to improve well-being, mental health and life-chances – directed at addressing the causes of poverty.

We know that there are large differences in life expectancy between the most privileged and the most disadvantaged social groups living in Oxford.

People with a good home, a good education, a good income and a strong network of family and friends have greater chances of being well and of leading fulfilling lives.

As a councillor for a ward in which one in four adults holds at least one degree, yet two out of every five adults are without any or hold very few qualifications, it is evident that educational outcomes impact upon life chances. A rise in the number of households without adequate or secure accommodation is placing further risk upon the educational opportunities of children from poorer families.

The better the social and economic standing of people, the better are the opportunities for children to flourish and overcome poverty.

Consequently, within our recommendations the Inequality Panel calls for:

- Increased provision of decent, truly affordable housing
- Improved provision of key worker housing
- Improved accreditation to improve standards within the private rented sector
- Greater promotion and take-up of the Living Wage
- Extended use of social clauses within procurement contracts to assist people into good, sustainable jobs
- Improved partnerships for overcoming silos, through a multi-agency approach for addressing the causes of inequality
- Improved monitoring, measurement and reporting of the impacts of inequality

On behalf of the Inequality Panel, I express our sincere thanks for the input and evidence provided by individuals, community groups, single interest groups, academics, officers of Oxford City Council and Oxfordshire County Council, Oxfordshire Clinical Commissioning Group. And, the panel is most grateful for the support of our Scrutiny Officer, Andrew Brown.

Van Coulter
Chair for the Inequality Panel

Summary of recommendations

Recommendation 1 - We recommend that the City Council leads on the development of a long-term multi-agency inequality strategy for Oxford. This should be informed in part by the evidence gathered in this Inequality Review and enhanced when Oxfordshire Clinical Commissioning Group produces its report on health inequalities. The Strategy should be supported by an Action Plan that includes any accepted Inequality Review recommendations.

Recommendation 2 – We recommend that the City Council ensures that it has sufficient staffing resources in partnership posts to play a leading role in working with other agencies to combat inequality in Oxford.

Recommendation 3 - We recommend that the City Council commissions Professor Danny Dorling and the City Council's Social Research Officer to develop an Oxford City Inequality Index based on aspects of inequality that that the City Council can influence either directly, or indirectly to a significant extent. Council Performance should be assessed against the movement of this index.

Recommendation 4 - We recommend that all strategy papers and major decisions should include an assessment of their short, medium and long term impacts on inequality. This assessment could be based on an Inequality Index (see recommendation 3), and guidance should be available to assessing officers.

Recommendation 5 - We recommend that the City Council progresses all options for boosting the supply of affordable housing, including by:

a) Continuing to push for a review of the Green Belt around Oxford,
b) Enforcing the City Council's 50% affordable housing policy,
c) Considering greater use of Compulsory Purchase Orders to buy derelict land and properties that aren't coming forward for development,
d) Evaluating the potential local impacts of the new Governments housing policies, such as extending Right to Buy to housing association properties,
e) Encouraging ethical or institutional investors to rent good standard accommodation to people in housing need at affordable rates,
f) Aiming to make Oxford a centre of excellence in innovation for new social and affordable housing solutions, ensuring that its own policies (such as the Balance of Dwellings Policy) are compatible with this aim. Affordable Oxford could be asked to provide advice on what options would be viable in Oxford,
g) Considering whether there is scope for the City Council or the Universities to promote 'inter-generational shared living'.
h) Considering whether there is a way that the City Council can assist groups of older people to downsize collectively while staying together as a community, perhaps by creating a group or register that people can join or sign up to.

Recommendation 6 - We note the significant difficulties that schools, hospitals and universities (as well as businesses) face in attracting workers to settle in Oxford, and recommend that the City Council:

a) **Pushes for more new build keyworker housing within the 20% of affordable housing that is provided as intermediate housing,**
b) **Seeks to extend its keyworker housing intervention to more teachers (this is currently offered to senior teaching staff),**
c) **Considers whether there is scope to assist key workers (particularly teachers in priority schools) in accessing housing in the private rented sector, for example by encouraging registered landlords to offer 3 year tenancies and agreeing to raise rents by no more than the CPI measure of inflation,**

Recommendation 7 - We note that the City Council is developing a Private Rented Sector Strategy and recommend that this aims to extend the City Council's interventions in the private rented sector to address abuses in the student housing market and poor standards across the wider private rented sector. This should include the extension of HMO licensing to cover more properties where possible and the introduction of mandatory landlord accreditation.

Recommendation 8 - We recommend that the City Council:

a) **Calls on the new Vice-Chancellor of the University of Oxford to provide reinvigorated engagement in Oxford's housing sector by learning from the Cambridge model and providing new accommodation to house academics.**
b) **Tasks the new Assistant Chief Executive with working closely with the University sector and encouraging a greater degree of input into city matters, including financial contributions where appropriate.**

Recommendation 9 – We recommend that the City Council builds on its commendable work on addressing fuel poverty by:

a) **Making a fuel poverty calculator available online that directs people in fuel poverty to contact the City Council for advice on what support they may be entitled to,**
b) **Asking Trading Standards whether they would like the City Council to refer cases to them and whether they would be prepared to give the City Council any enforcement powers where an Energy Performance Certificate is required.**

Recommendation 10 - We recommend that the City Council builds on its work with Oxford Clinical Commissioning Group and other health partners by:

a) **Supporting the delivery of more proactive health interventions in areas of multiple deprivations, such as contacting people who miss appointments,**
b) **Working towards the concept of pooled budgeting in areas where evidence suggests that this approach can improve health outcomes.**

c) **Utilising the City Council's assets (such as leisure centres) and the agencies we support to facilitate social prescribing, and encouraging more GPs to take up social prescribing,**
d) **Working with partners to develop a single online point of access for multiple services in Oxford, including health, housing and social care.**

Recommendation 11 - We recommend that the City Council explores how factors around inequality and public health could be designed in to the planning and development of sites. These factors should include cycling and walking provision, the accessibility of parks, and the provision of a variety of housing within the street scene. Consideration should also be given to shaping new communities. For example, new communities should include a centre and a shared open space.

Recommendation 12 - We recommend that the City Council:

a) **Assists in bringing about negotiations with local health, housing and social care commissioners and providers so that a county wide discharge policy for people experiencing homelessness can be adopted as per best practice guidelines,**
b) **Extends interventions aimed at supporting homeless people with complex needs (e.g. substance abuse and mental health issues), who are often excluded from accessing the services they need.**

Recommendation 13 - Oxford City Council is leading the way in defining, measuring and tackling fuel poverty and we recommend that the same priority should be given to the issue of food poverty. A part-time role should be created to tackle food poverty, which should involve facilitating the work of the not-for-profit and voluntary sector to maximise their impact, and developing a food poverty strategy for Oxford. This strategy should aim to replicate best practice established by Bristol to reduce food bank demand and increase access to good and affordable food across the city.

Recommendation 14 – We recommend that the City Council:

a) **Identifies how it can provide a greater degree of funding security to Asylum Welcome. Consideration should be given to including their work within the remit of the Community Grants commissioning programme, which awards funding for 3 years rather than annually. This will reduce Asylum Welcome's administrative workload and help to ensure that they remain viable over the medium term.**
b) **Explores whether it could provide low cost accommodation to third sector organisations by utilising unused capacity in Council-owned assets such as Community Centres.**

Recommendation 15 - We strongly endorse the City Council's approach to combatting financial exclusion and recommend that the City Council:

a) **Ensures that the Welfare Reform Team are fully and best deployed in order to provide greater assistance and proactively reach more people, particularly those moving on to Universal Credit,**

b) **Moves towards implementing a 'single view of debt' in order to identify multiple debts owed to the Council, and where possible, consolidate these,**
c) **Gives a high priority to continuing to protect the current level of funding for the advice sector over the medium term,**
d) **Identifies funding to maintain debt advice provision provided by the Citizens Advice Bureau, which is currently at risk,**
e) **Continues to work closely with CAB and other agencies to encourage the take up of unclaimed benefits.**

Recommendation 16 – We recommend that the City Council establishes a reliable directory of charities for Oxford, setting out the aims, principle client groups and types of relief provided. This will help to ensure that local charities have a greater awareness of what other charities do.

Recommendation 17 - We recommend that the City Council continues to prioritise improving educational attainment in the city by:

a) **Offering a new educational grant programme to which Head Teachers from schools in deprived areas can apply. This programme would provide tangible output-based funding to reduce educational inequalities in city schools. The criteria for awards should be non-prescriptive but grants could be used to fund specific line items in School Improvement Plans focused on pupil premium and Special Educational Needs students, for example.**
b) **Engaging with partners and considers whether it has a role in ensuring that eligible pupils are registered for the pupil premium so that city schools receive the funding they are entitled to.**

Recommendation 18 - We recommend that the City Council utilises skills within communities and works with partners to maximise every opportunity to provide employment and career paths for more residents living in areas of multiple deprivation, including by:

a) **Seeking to influence and improve the provision of targeted careers advice in schools, extending this to younger pupils (years 7-8), as well as offering mentoring into adulthood,**
b) **Extending the use of social clauses to create more and better opportunities for young people. Clarity is required as to how the City Council will ensure that developers deliver social clauses,**
c) **Extending the offer of reduced fees for tutors to all Community Centres situated in areas of multiple deprivations. The City Council should also continue to make better use of Community Centres and promote them as vibrant local hubs.**
d) **Maximising links with universities, private schools, the student hub and businesses to get more volunteer help for appropriate programmes. These opportunities could include coaching and mentoring to help vulnerable people into work, assisting young people to whom English is not a first language, and broadening access to resources such as arts provision.**

Recommendation 19 - We recommend that the City Council calls on local employers to put an end to exploitative employment practices in the city. These include employers charging restaurant staff to wait tables, paying less than the minimum wage, and employing workers on zero hours contracts against their will.

Recommendation 20 – We recommend that the City Council continues to look to raise wages by:

a) **Creating a Living Wage Hub in Oxford based around the Oxford Living Wage. This should involve a programme of activities to promote the Oxford Living Wage, and a distinct logo that Oxford Living Wage employers are encouraged to display. Ideally these activities should be led by engaged citizens but they may initially require some officer resource.**
b) **Identifying a public face of the Oxford Living Wage which could be a member champion.**
c) **Working constructively with the Living Wage Foundation in promoting Living Wage Week and seeking to raise wages and improve working conditions in Oxford, particularly in low paid sectors such as hospitality, health and social care.**

Recommendation 21 - We recognise that Oxford City Council is a major employer in the city, and recommend that the City Council continues to develop its own employment practices through:

a) **More flexible recruitment practices such as accepting CVs and more widespread use of assessment centres,**
b) **An annual managed calendar of interventions targeting BME and other underrepresented groups,**
c) **Better targeting of constructive feedback to unsuccessful applicants,**
d) **Interactive and accessible recruitment webpages with guidance for applicants,**
e) **Uplifting the salaries of lower paid staff at a higher rate than those of higher paid staff to ensure that the pay gap between them doesn't increase over time.**

Appendices

Appendix 1 – Terms of reference
Appendix 2 – Acknowledgements
Appendix 3 – Background documents
Appendix 4 – Responses to call for evidence
Appendix 5 – Letter from Healthwatch Oxfordshire
Appendix 6 – Overview of the City Council's contribution to combatting inequality

Introduction

1. The Inequality Panel is a cross-party working group that was established by the City Council's Scrutiny Committee during the 2014/15 municipal year. Its membership comprises four City Councillors:

   Councillor Van Coulter (Chair)
   Councillor Andrew Gant
   Councillor Ben Lloyd-Shogbesan
   Councillor David Thomas

Background

2. Inequality is found in almost every community and most obviously refers to the disparity between rich and poor caused by unequal distributions of pay, income and wealth. Inequality also has a social dimension whereby opportunities, rewards and social resources are distributed unequally within society. A person's 'social capital', which is their access to valuable support networks, is an important element of this. A number of personal characteristics are strongly related to inequality, including gender, ethnicity and disability. These are among the 9 protected characteristics set out in the Equality Act 2010.

3. Oxford is a successful and vibrant city in many ways that benefits from having a resilient local economy and low levels of unemployment. Like any city, Oxford's dynamic urban environment presents challenges as well as opportunities. However, a number of factors are more specific to Oxford and contribute to inequality in the city. Foremost amongst these is the very high cost of housing. Oxford is the least affordable city in the UK in which to buy a house[1], and the second least affordable city in the UK in which to rent a home[2],partly due to Oxford's attractiveness to commuters working in London. This exacerbates the disparity between rich and poor and is having damaging effects on educational attainment and social mobility.As a result, many harder pressed residents are struggling to pay for essentials such as food and energy, and some are leaving the city altogether, or if asked cannot see how they will be able to afford to settle in Oxford in the long term.

4. Oxford City Council is a district council operating in a two tier local authority area. It is responsible for services such as housing, planning, leisure, environmental services, and council tax and benefits. A number of services that impact inequality, such as early years and childcare provision, education, social care and public health, are run by Oxfordshire County Council.

5. Oxford City Council's strapline is 'building a world class city for everyone'. The Council's Corporate Plan states that 'Oxford City Council does all it can to make Oxford a fairer, more equal place'. It also makes a policy commitment to 'narrow the gap between rich and poor'. A key ambition of Oxford City Council is to move beyond being a service delivery organisation to becoming a 'leader of place' through partnership working and collaboration. This means that the City Council

[1] Lloyds Bank Affordable Cities Review, Lloyds Banking Group, 27 March 2015
[2] Revealed Britain's most expensive places to rent a home, The Guardian, 1 May 2015

wants to be recognised as being the leading authority and voice for the city of Oxford.

6. We believe that widening inequality presents problems for everyone, including top and middle earners, and that a continuous reduction in inequality should be one of the characteristics of a world class city for everyone.

Review scope

7. The Inequality Panel was commissioned to undertake a time-limited review, drawing together a number of related topics that City Councillors wanted to explore, such as; food poverty, child poverty and health inequalities. The Inequality Panel met on 13 October 2014 to agree a draft scope, before reporting back to the Scrutiny Committee for approval on 10 November 2014.

8. We agreed to review how the City Council contributes to combatting harmful social and economic inequality in Oxford, and whether there is more that could reasonably be done. By maintaining a focus on how the Council could improve outcomes for local residents, we felt that we could to tackle this broad and wide-ranging scope in a manageable way. Our main aims were to:

    1. *Understand the scale, reasons and impact of inequality in Oxford.*
    2. *Identify specific areas where the City Council can make the most difference in combatting inequality.*
    3. *Make deliverable, evidence-based recommendations that are co-produced with local citizens or stakeholders where possible.*

9. The Panel recognised that the City Council was already doing a lot of good work to combat inequality. However, we wanted to test and challenge the claims in the City Council's Corporate Plan on behalf of all Councillors. We felt that a cross-cutting review of inequality would enable us to identify any gaps in provision or partnership working, and highlight areas of emerging need.

10. We were also mindful that, following a recent peer review exercise, the City Council received feedback as to how it could provide strong, effective and visible leadership in the city. We wanted to see whether and how this theme could be applied to the City Council's aim of making Oxford a fairer, more equal place.

11. Finally, our review was designed to complement, rather than duplicate, the work of local partners such as Oxfordshire County Council and Oxfordshire Clinical Commissioning Group.

12. The full terms of reference for this review that were agreed by the Scrutiny Committee on 10 November are included as Appendix 1.

Methods of investigation

13. Having agreed the scope of the review, the Panel issued a call for evidence. This was accompanied by a press release which received local media attention. A brief online survey was made available on the City Council's website for 2 months. It was also emailed directly to groups and individuals registered on the City Council's consultation system that had expressed an interest in consultations to do with equalities, housing, council tax and benefits, or community issues. 30 responses were received and these have all been considered by the Panel. Several groups that responded were also invited to attend a meeting in person. The responses to our call for evidence are set out in full in Appendix 4.

14. The Inequality Panel held 5 public meetings between November 2014 and April 2015. These meetings were attended by representatives of Age UK, Asylum Welcome, Community Action Groups Oxfordshire, Cultivate Oxford, Healthwatch Oxfordshire, Oxford Citizens Advice Bureau, Oxfordshire Clinical Commissioning Group, and Oxford and District Child Poverty Action Group. We also spoke to social geographer and author Profession Danny Dorling and a local social enterprise focused on overcoming issues of low self-esteem in vulnerable young women.

15. The Panel held discussions with a number of City Council officers, including the Chief Executive and senior officers responsible for Housing Needs, Policy and Partnerships, Welfare Reform, and Communities and Neighbourhoods Services. We are very grateful to all those who provided evidence and informed the outcomes of this review. A list of acknowledgements is provided as Appendix 2.

16. We also reviewed a wide range of research literature and policy documentation, and a list of background documents is included as Appendix 3.

Inequality in Oxford

Context

17. Many cities think they have particular sets of issues and needs butOxford is genuinely exceptional in terms of housing and education. Oxford-born Professor Danny Dorling advised us that if he was arranging a field trip to look at inequality in Western Europe, he would choose Oxford. Harmful inequality is evident at the lower end of the income spectrum, with more people experiencing homelessness, struggling to afford food and heating, seeing poorer educational outcomes for their children, and seeking advice for personal debt. However, the problems that inequality presents for top and middle earners – such as long term participation in the private rented sector - also need to be recognised and better understood.

18. Oxford benefits from a strong economy and low unemployment but the severe cost and limited supply of housing acts as a big social distorter and makes it extremely difficult for most people to make homes in the city. Nearly everyone we spoke to said that the lack of affordable housing is the major cause for concern in Oxford. High demand is exacerbated by limited land availability within the city and barriers to accessing this land. Last year the cost of an average house in Oxford rose by £30,000, yet a third of Oxford's working age households

were £1,594 worse off per year on average due to welfare reforms[3]. The cost of housing in Oxford is comparable to London but local employers do not pay London wages. Buying a home is now beyond the means of some 80 per cent of the local population.

19. More Oxford households now rent than own their own home, and of these, the majority live in the private rented sector[4]. The increase in the private rented sector has been the biggest change in Oxford's housing market in the last 10 years and puts a lot of newly forming households, young and vulnerable people outside of the home ownership market. Private rented housing is not only expensive due to undersupply driving up rental values, but much of it is of a poor standard and tenancies are insecure. There are strong links between poor housing and poor physical and mental health. For many residents as well as students, sharing accommodation is the only affordable option.In more extreme cases, migrant workers and vulnerable young families have been found living in 'beds in sheds'. The welfare of people occupying these unsuitable and hazardous structures is a major concern.

20. The housing crisis in Oxford affects everybody. Many schools, hospitals and universities in the city are struggling to recruit a range of professionals and there is concern that if Oxford continues to become more unaffordable for the majority of people to live in, public bodies will only be able to employ people who are well off. In the meantime, many NHS staff and care workers are themselves living in poverty or struggling to get by. We also note that many businesses are also reporting similar issues in recruiting and retaining staff. These are acute problems in Oxford.

A life course of inequality

21. Inequality can be understood as a life course from early years through to old age. Some geographical areas experience multiple levels of deprivation including low skills, low incomes, poor housing and poor health. Child poverty rates in Oxford are close to the UK average. However, poverty is dispersed very unequally across the city, with 72% of the 6,600 children living below the poverty line residing in 9 of the city's 24 wards, all of which are in the East and South East of the city. Health outcomes across the city differ widely too and there is a wide variance in average life expectancy across the city, particularly for men. This cycle of deprivation is very difficult to break.

22. Education could play a major role in improving social mobility and providing a route out of poverty. However, for some of the 75% of Oxford's young people who are not educated privately, their experience of education reinforces low aspirations and perpetuates inequality. The high cost of housing means that Oxford schools struggle to recruit and retain experienced higher and middle ranking teachers. Newly qualified teachers are easier to recruit but tend to rent for a while before leaving the city because they can't afford to settle here. The high turnover of teaching staff disrupts efforts to improve poor levels of educational attainment in a number of city schools. The result is that access to

[3] The impacts of welfare reform in Oxford, Centre for Economic and Social Inclusion, April 2014, p. 22
[4] More households now rent rather than own their home, Oxford City Council, April 2014

higher education amongst local students is higher in Blackpool than it is in Oxford.

Areas where Oxford City Council can make the most difference

23. We have identified the City Council services and interventions that have the most impact on reducing inequality in Oxford and also sought to identify specific areas where there is scope for the City Council to reasonably do more, either within additional resources or with modest additional spend. Our overview of the City Council's contribution to combatting inequality is included as Appendix 6. This includes gaps and opportunities identified during this review by people who responded to our call for evidence, those who spoke to us in person, Council officers and scrutiny Councillors.

24. We were unable to look in detail at all aspects of the City Council's contribution and have highlighted some specific Council functions and services for further consideration at the end of this report. Having deliberated on all the evidence gathered we reached a number of specific recommendations. These are grouped into the following four themes:
    I. Taking a strategic approach to inequality
    II. Health & Housing
    III. Tackling social and financial exclusion
    IV. Helping residents to fulfil their potential

Taking a strategic approach to inequality

25. The City Council aspires to put inequality alleviation at the heart of everything it does. We endorse the laudable policy statement in the City Council's Corporate Plan and found that there is a lot of good work taking place across the authority to support this:

    Oxford City Council does all that it can to make Oxford a fairer, more equal place" – Oxford City Council Corporate Plan[5]

26. The causes and drivers of inequality are complex and obscure, and there remains a risk that the long-term strategic direction of the council may inadvertently exacerbate rather than alleviate inequalities within the city. The recommendations of this report are in partan effort to mitigate this risk.

A strategy for inequality

27. We suggest that a multi-agency strategy for inequality should be developed to guide the priorities and work on this agenda. We think the City Council is well placed to lead on the development of this strategy, which should build on the findings of this Inequality Review and be further informed by OCCG's study of health inequalities, as well as the input of all relevant agencies.

[5] Corporate Plan 2015-2019, Oxford City Council, February 2015

Recommendation 1 - We recommend that the City Council leads on the development of a long-term multi-agency inequality strategy for Oxford. This should be informed in part by the evidence gathered in this Inequality Review and enhanced when Oxfordshire Clinical Commissioning Group produces its report on health inequalities. The Strategy should be supported by an Action Plan that includes any accepted Inequality Review recommendations.

Partnership working

28. The Council has strong links with a number of key partners, including the health sector and a range of voluntary and community groups. Given the extent of the problem of inequality in Oxford, there is a need for all agencies to work together and intervene effectively at all ages in order to make a lasting difference. The organisations we spoke to all recognise this need. We note that a management restructure is taking place and suggest that the City Council considers whether it has the resources it needs to play a leading role in working with partners to combat inequality.

Recommendation 2 – We recommend that the City Council ensures that it has sufficient staffing resources in partnership posts to play a leading role in working with other agencies to combat inequality in Oxford.

Measuring and monitoring inequality

29. The City Council's Social Research Officer produces a range of statistical information and analysis about Oxford and its population which provides some really valuable insights. We were also fortunate to speak with Professor Danny Dorling, a leading social geographer with extensive knowledge of issues of inequality in the city. We suggest that the City Council seeks to utilise this expertise by commissioning an inequality index for Oxford.

30. Council performance should be based in part on an assessment of how successfully it impacts the aspects of inequality over which it has direct influence, or significant indirect influence.We believe that a continuous reduction in Oxford's harmfully high levels of inequality should be one of the characteristics of a world class city for everyone.

Recommendation 3 - We recommend that the City Council commissions Professor Danny Dorling and the City Council's Social Research Officer to develop an Oxford City Inequality Index based on aspects of inequality that that the City Council can influence either directly, or indirectly to a significant extent. Council Performance should be assessed against the movement of this index.

Decision making

31. Inequality alleviation could be more embedded within the City Council and its decision making. We would like all major Council decisions and development projects to be assessed on their expected aggregate impacts on inequality. This couldinclude factors such as the quality of any employment contracts created and, if the project is intended to generate economic growth, how equitably this

growth is likely to be shared. This assessment could be based on an inequality index and guidance should be provided to assessing officers.

Recommendation 4 - We recommend that all strategy papers and major decisions should include an assessment of their short, medium and long term impacts on inequality. This assessment could be based on an Inequality Index (see recommendation 3), and guidance should be available to assessing officers.

Health & Housing

32. The City Council is the housing authority for Oxford and provides a wide range of services aimed at tackling housing needs in the city, from presenting options in cases of statutory homelessness to building new social housing. Housing can directly contribute to health outcomes and the City Council also has a wider role in public health.

Affordable Housing

33. The lack of affordable housing is a major factor behind inequality in Oxford and the City Council is already aiming to increase the supply of affordable housing in the city in a number of ways. We have suggested a number of additional options that could warrant further exploration.

Green belt review

34. Restrictions on developing the green belt surrounding Oxford are a major barrier to the provision of new affordable housing that could meet the city's housing needs. An assessment of the housing market in Oxfordshire found that the city requires 24,000 to 32,000 new homes between 2011 and 2031 in order to meet its housing needs[6]. However, an assessment of land availability found that the total capacity for new homes within the city over this time period is only 10,212 dwellings[7].

35. Oxford's current and future housing needs could be met if a very small proportion of the green belt was developed. We believe that this would be preferable to, and more sustainable than focusing solely on expanding county towns. Approximately half of Oxford's work force already commutes in to the city and this would result in higher CO2 emissions and place additional strain on the local transport network[8]. We urge the City Council to continue to press for a comprehensive review of the green belt around Oxford as part of a strategy for increasing the supply of affordable housing.

50% affordable housing policy

36. The City Council has a policy whereby planning permission will only be granted for residential developments of 10 or more units if a minimum of 50% of the new homes are provided as affordable housing, unless viability evidence demonstrates a need to reduce this. Developers of smaller sites are required to

[6] Oxfordshire Strategic Housing Market Assessment, Oxford City Council, March 2014
[7] Oxford's Housing Land Availability and Unmet Need Assessment, Oxford City Council, December 2014
[8] Commuting to and from Oxford in 2011, Oxford City Council, September 2014

make a financial contribution to the provision of new off-site affordable housing. We heard anecdotal evidence that some developers may be holding back sites for development in the expectation that the 50% policy will eventually be reduced or removed.If developers are holding on to derelict land or buildings then the City has the option of using Compulsory Purchase Orders, which it could pursue more actively.

Right to Buy

37. The Council's spending plans assume that approximately 40 social housing units will be sold each year through the Right to Buy scheme and variations on this number represent a financial risk to the Council. It is difficult for the City Council to replace social housing stock lost to Right to Buy within the city limits. Housing need is high but just maintaining the current level of social housing provision is a significant challenge for the City Council. People with housing needs in Oxford are now as likely to be placed in the private rented sector as in the social rented sector but Right to Buy only benefits the latter group.

38. The new government is committed to extending the Right to Buy scheme to housing association properties and local authorities are being advised not to put their energies in seeking to avoid Right to Buy. The impact of the extension of Right to Buy is not yet known but is likely to represent a further challenge to the City Council. We suggest that the City Council evaluates the expected local impacts of government housing policy, including the extension of Right to Buy.

Institutional investors

39. Given the scale of the housing problem, the Porch charity which provides support to homeless and vulnerably house adults suggest that the City Council should look at ways of encouraging institutional investors and ethical funds to invest in providing new good standard affordable accommodation in the city.

Innovative solutions

40. We suggest that the City Council should look at innovative ways of boosting the supply of affordable housing, through innovative funding, land access, delivery and ownership models. Based on the axiom 'necessity is the mother of invention', we would like to see the Council aim to make Oxford a centre of excellence in innovation for new affordable housing solutions. The City Council is already looking at investing in 'real asset lettings' and has invested a small sum in church groups to help them to make houses available on a small scale. We considered proposing a number of other specific options that may warrant further exploration, such as 'pod homes' and community land trusts.

Pod homes

41. Pod homes could provide high density accommodation to potential first time buyers at affordable rates. We recognise that Pod homes would not solve the issue of land availability, and that significant developments of small units are not compatible with the City Council's balance of dwellings policy

Balance of dwellings policy

42. The City Council's balance of dwellings policy dates from 2008 and requires that, in developments of more than 4 homes, a proportion of new units are larger units.

It aims to shape the housing mix in the city in 2020 and deliver a balanced mix of housing to meet the projected future household need.

43. We received representations that the policy is unnecessarybecause Oxford already has a relatively high proportion of larger homes compared with other UK cities, and that people tend to make do with less space when prices are high. We heard that this policy is likely to be having some impact on house price inflation, which is having a corrosive effect on social inclusion and inequality.

44. New larger properties completed since the policy was adopted represent 1.2% of the city's total housing stock, so the impact on house prices is likely to be marginal. However, we came to the view that an evidence based review of this policy would be timely.

Community Land Trusts

45. Community Land Trusts are independent, not-for-profit corporations that develop and run housing and other local assets on behalf of a community. This model has the benefits of providing genuinely affordable housing that will remain affordable in the long run and not be affected by rising land and rental values. Community Land Trusts may well provide one of the few robust ways the Council could protect new-build social housing from Right to Buy. We heard that the City Council hasn't explored this option butit is likely that the Council could provide the most units at the cheapest price itself.

46. We suggest that the City Council seeks independent advice on what types of affordable housing models would be viable in Oxford. A group such as Affordable Oxford could be asked to establish which innovative options could potentially form part of a wider, multi-faceted approach to increasing the supply of affordable housing.

Intergenerational shared living

47. Paul Cann of Age UK advised us that a number of older people are under-occupying big properties in Oxford and that intergenerational shared living arrangements have been under-exploited in the UK. Oxford has a large student population and 11% of all households in the city comprise people aged 65+ living alone, some of whom are under-occupying and may be experiencing isolation and loneliness[9]. There is an opportunity for the City Council and the Universities to encourage a scheme that matches students with under-occupying single over 65 households, in a way that has worked successfully in Lyon, France[10].

Downsizing

48. Age UK advised us that there is a very narrow range of good and affordable housing options for older people in Oxford, and we note that the City Council is currently undertaking a review of older people's housing in the city. We have also been made aware of cases where groups of older people want to downsize and stay together as a community. We suggest that the City Council explores whether there is scope to provide a mechanism for enabling groups of older

[9] Needs Assessment for Older People in Oxford, Oxford City Council, October 2013
[10] Jacques is 86. His housemate is 18, BBC Radio 4, 19 May 2015

people to downsize while staying together and retaining their close social networks.

Housing out of area

49. Due to the scale of the housing crisis it seemslikely thatthe City Council will be unable to meet Oxford's housing needs in the coming years, even with an extensive range of interventions. While it's not desirable, we recognise that it may be necessary for the City Council to look at options for delivering affordable housing to outside of Oxford. Westminster Council is also looking at this.

Recommendation 5 - We recommend that the City Council progresses all options for boosting the supply of affordable housing, including by:

- ***i) Continuing to push for a review of the Green Belt around Oxford,***
- ***j) Enforcing the City Council's 50% affordable housing policy,***
- ***k) Considering greater use of Compulsory Purchase Orders to buy derelict land and properties that aren't coming forward for development,***
- ***l) Evaluating the potential local impacts of the new Governments housing policies, such as extending Right to Buy to housing association properties,***
- ***m) Encouraging ethical or institutional investors to rent good standard accommodation to people in housing need at affordable rates,***
- ***n) Aiming to make Oxford a centre of excellence in innovation for new social and affordable housing solutions, ensuring that its own policies (such as the Balance of Dwellings Policy) are compatible with this aim. Affordable Oxford could be asked to provide advice on what options would be viable in Oxford,***
- ***o) Considering whether there is scope for the City Council or the Universities to promote 'inter-generational shared living'.***
- ***p) Considering whether there is a way that the City Council can assist groups of older people to downsize collectively while staying together as a community, perhaps by creating a group or register that people can join or sign up to.***

Key worker housing

50. Key working housing is housing allocated specifically for people in key public sector jobs, such as clinical health workers and senior teaching staff. Additional key worker housing could help to alleviate the problems that schools and hospitals experience in recruiting and retaining staff.

Intermediate housing

51. Oxford City Council's 50% affordable housing policy also stipulates that 20% of affordable housing should be provided as intermediate housing (affordable home ownership options). We suggest that this should include more new accommodation made available exclusively to key workers.

Shared equity loan scheme

52. As part of its educational attainment programme, the City Council has made a significant investment in keyworker housing by offering a shared equity loan scheme to support recruitment to senior leadership posts in city schools. Given

the very high turnover of teaching staff at all levels in certain schools, we suggest that the City Council looks at the case for extending this offer to more teachers.

Access to the private rented sector

53. The City Council should also explore the possible scope for working with accredited landlords to assist teachers and other key workers in accessing the private rental market, for example by offering longer, more secure tenures and capping rent increases.

Recommendation 6 - We note the significant difficulties that schools, hospitals and universities (as well as businesses) face in attracting workers to settle in Oxford, and recommend that the City Council:

- ***e) Pushes for more new build keyworker housing within the 20% of affordable housing that is provided as intermediate housing,***
- ***f) Seeks to extend its keyworker housing intervention to more teachers (this is currently offered to senior teaching staff),***
- ***g) Considers whether there is scope to assist key workers (particularly teachers in priority schools) in accessing housing in the private rented sector, for example by encouraging registered landlords to offer 3 year tenancies and agreeing to raise rents by no more than the CPI measure of inflation,***

Private rented sector housing

54. The private rented sector is of particular concern in Oxford due to high costs, poor standards and some rogue landlords. There is a marked difference in the level of wrap-around services a tenant receives as a social housing tenant than as a private sector tenant – the latter being at a significant disadvantage. The Citizens Advice Bureau advised us that tenants have better regulatory protection from their toaster than from retaliatory evictions by unscrupulous landlords. Oxford Child Poverty Action Group said that expensive and insecure housing has an impact on educational attainment and is causing some families to move away from the city, losing their 'soft networks'.Oxfordshire Clinical Commissioning Group advised us that many health issues are largely dependent on housing issues, including; over-crowding, damp, lack of effective heating and insulation, and psychological problems from moving. The City Council isactivelyraising standards in this sector throughlicensing Houses in Multiple Occupation, operating a Landlord Accreditation Scheme and tackling unlawful dwellings, of which approximately 270 are estimated to be occupied in Oxford[11].

Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMOs)

55. One in five residents now live in a house in multiple occupation (HMO), including an increasing number of families with young children. Standards in this sector are a major concern because poor housing can contribute to poor health outcomes, and this sector includes much of the city's worst housing stock. 90% of the 3,440 licensed HMOs in Oxford did not initially meet the City Council's minimum standards and it is estimated that there is a similar number of

[11] Unlawful Developments Progress Report, Oxford City Council, February 2015

unlicensed HMOs across the city[12]. We would welcome efforts to extend this licensing regime to as many HMOs as possible and strengthening compliance.

Landlord Accreditation Scheme

56. Letting agents and private residential landlords are encouraged to join this voluntary scheme whichaims to improve the condition and management of the private rented sector. However, fewer than 100 landlords and agents have taken up accreditation, which is low compared to the total number operating in the city. We suggest that this scheme be extended to all privately let residential properties on a mandatory basis, as already happens in Wales and Newham Borough[13]. This would help to address the unfairness of some landlords benefiting from high rents while doing very littleto improve the substandard and insecureliving conditions of their tenants. We are also concerned about some particularly poor practices and conditions in the student housing market.

Recommendation7 - We note that the City Council is developing a Private Rented Sector Strategy and recommend that this aims to extend the City Council's interventions in the private rented sector to address abuses in the student housing market and poor standards across the wider private rented sector. This should include the extension of HMO licensing to cover more properties where possible and the introduction of mandatory landlord accreditation.

University engagement

57. The presence of two universities has a significant impact on housing in Oxford. Theybring with them some 32,000 undergraduate and postgraduate students, a significant proportion of whom live in the private rented sector[14]. The University of Oxford in particularis a major presence in the city in terms of its spending power, employment and the assets and property portfolio it holds. It is in the interests of the University that the city is successful and functioning well.

58. We note that the University of Oxford is looking to expand the post doctorate research sector and attract 1,100 senior academics to the city, which would put additional pressure on housing. We would like to see the universities actively housing more academics and students. We note that some of the colleges hold low-grade agricultural land around Barton which is in the green belt but could potentially be developed as housing. The University of Cambridge recently built 3,000 homes, half of which have been allocated as key worker housing for University and College staff[15]. The new Vice Chancellor of the University of Oxford should be encouraged to look at this example and provide a greater degree of input in housing matters in the city.

59. We understand that the City Council's new Assistant Chief Executive will be responsible for external affairs and hope that they will play a key role in speaking to organisations such as the University of Oxford, and where appropriate, urging

[12] Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMO) Licensing Scheme, Oxford City Council, June 2015
[13] Registration scheme to target rogue landlords begins, BBC, 1 January 2013
[14] Student Numbers in Oxford, Oxford City Council, April 2012
[15] Chancellor and Vice-Chancellor break ground on £1bn North West Cambridge development, University of Cambridge, 20 June 2013

them to make a greater contribution to the city. Oxford Brookes University already provides funding towards bus services and the University of Oxford should be urged to make similar contributions towards new schemes or services that are in its interests and have wider benefits to the city as a whole.

Recommendation 8 - We recommend that the City Council:

c) Calls on the new Vice-Chancellor of the University of Oxford to provide reinvigorated engagement in Oxford's housing sector by learning from the Cambridge model and providing new accommodation to house academics.

d) Tasks the new Assistant Chief Executive with working closely with the University sector and encouraging a greater degree of input intocity matters, including financial contributions where appropriate.

Fuel Poverty

60. Fuel poverty in England is measured by a Low Income High Costs definition, which is driven by three components; poor energy efficiency, high energy costs, and low household income. We fully endorse the City Council's Fuel Poverty Strategy, which focuses on energy efficiency improvement work and complements the income maximisation activities detailed in the Council's Financial Inclusion Strategy.

61. In the majority of cases fuel poverty affects people in private tenures living in properties built prior to 1974. It disproportionately impacts onvulnerable groups that tend to spend more time at home, such as the elderly, disabled, long-term sick and the very young. It can be difficult for people who may be in fuel poverty to know whether they are entitled to various forms of support. We suggest that the City Council should use a fuel poverty calculator, which should be made available online for staff and the public to use, to determine who is eligible for support and to direct people in fuel poverty to contact the Council for advice.

<u>Oxford City Council's Housing Stock</u>

62. Lots of work has been undertaken within the Council's housing stock to improve energy efficiency and most of the quick wins, such as installing double glazing, gas condenser boilers and cavity wall insulation, have been completed. Further strategic investments in the Council's housing stock are on-going and the City Council is offering free energy audits to Council tenants.

<u>Fuel Poverty in the private rented sector</u>

63. The City Council has been working with landlords to prepare for national changes aimed at improving energy efficiency. From 2016, landlords can't refuse a tenant's reasonable request for energy efficiency improvements, and from 2018, only properties with an Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) rating of 'E' or higher can be rented out. The City Council enforces where there is underperformance in the private rented sector and has been checking the EPC rating of 'F' & 'G' rated properties as well as those that have no EPC rating for excess cold. The County Council's Trading Standards service is responsible for enforcing where an EPC is required. Information sharing between the two authorities could potentially lead to better outcomes and we suggest that the City

Council could also ask for powers to enforce where EPCs are required if this would reduce duplication or help to improve overall efficiency.

Recommendation9– We recommend that the City Council builds on its commendable work on addressing fuel poverty by:

c) Making a fuel poverty calculator available online that directs people in fuel poverty to contact the City Council for advice on what support they may be entitled to,

d) Asking Trading Standards whether they would like the City Council to refer cases to them and whether they would be prepared to give the City Council any enforcement powers where an Energy Performance Certificate is required.

Health

64. Oxfordshire Clinical Commissioning Group (OCCG) advised us that they are commissioning a report into health inequalities. This will build up an evidence base and identify suitable measures and actions to address health inequalities because entrenched health inequalities aren't improving.Life expectancy is lower in the most deprived areas of the city and life expectancy gap is 8.8 years for men and 3.7 years for women[16]. Some families experience intergenerational poor health despite lots of effort from lots of people. Learning Disability and severe Mental Health are big issues in Oxford as outcomes are relatively poor. The worst health outcomes occur in the areas of deprivation, where take up of free health checks is low. OCCG work with the City Council to ensure that local health plans and community plans are joined up and to identify opportunities for potential joint project work, for example on self-harm.

Proactive health interventions

65. The high population turnover in the city means that many people slip through the net, so there is a need to set up more proactive health structures that can spot issues early on, such as people not taking their medication. At the moment the focus is on patients who do attend appointments but missed appointments cost the NHS some £9.5m a year in Oxfordshire[17].

Pooled budgeting

66. A number of organisations impact on health outcomes and there is a need to ensure there is the same drive to reduce inequalities across all organisations, and to move towards pooling resources in areas such as planning, housing and transport. However, the culture of annual budget setting is a barrier to this aim.

Social prescribing

67. OCCG advised us that the concept of social prescribing is been trialled in Gloucestershire and that OCCG is keeping a close watch on progress. Social prescribing is where GPs prescribe activities that people might benefit from to address various health issues, including mental health disorders. We support this concept where evidence suggests that it can make a difference and hope

[16] Oxford Health Profile 2015, Public Health England, June 2015

[17] The real cost of missed appointments, Oxford University Hospitals NHT Trust, 11 June 2015

that GPs will be encouraged to engage in this agenda. We suggest that the City Council should be prepared to utilise its own assets, such as by allowing prescribed access to leisure centres and swimming pools, together with the agencies it supports, to facilitate social prescribing in Oxford.

Online access to services

68. In discussion with OCCG, we identified that a single online point of access for multiple services in Oxford would be a welcome development. This could take the form of an 'assessment of needs' website that provides a way in to various services provided by a range of agencies, including; health, mental health, housing, social care etc.

Recommendation 10- We recommend that the City Council builds on its work with Oxford Clinical Commissioning Group and other health partners by:

- ***e) Supporting the delivery of more proactive health interventions in areas of multiple deprivations, such as contacting people who miss appointments,***
- ***f) Working towards the concept of pooled budgeting in areas where evidence suggests that this approach can improve health outcomes.***
- ***g) Utilising the City Council's assets (such as leisure centres) and the agencies we support to facilitate social prescribing, and encouraging more GPs to take up social prescribing,***
- ***h) Working with partners to develop a single online point of access for multiple services in Oxford, including health, housing and social care.***

Planning new developments

69. As the planning authority, the City Council can consider how factors of inequality and public health are factored in to the planning system. Oxfordshire Clinical Commissioning Group advised us that open access, exercise, and cycling and walking should be built in to the planning and development of new sites.Consideration should also be given to the physical shape of these communities, to ensure that they are attractive places to live and have a sense of community, which can help to combat forms of social isolation.

70. Age UK advised us that there should be a greater variety of housing within the street scene in new developments so that older people may have the option of downsizing without having to leave their local area. The outside environment needs to be well lit, with good quality pavements and access to public toilets.

Recommendation 11 - We recommend that the City Council explores how factors around inequality and public health could be designed in to the planning and development of sites. These factors should include cycling and walking provision, the accessibility of parks, and the provision of a variety of housing within the street scene. Consideration should also be given to shaping new communities. For example, new communities should include a centre and a shared open space.

Tackling social and financial exclusion

71. Services and interventions that focus specifically on excluded groups can play a vital role in reducing inequalities. During our evidence gathering, we focused on a number of groups that are often 'below the radar', and identified some gaps in provision or areas where the City Council could play a greater role. The City Council also provides a range of services that focus on strengthen communities and promoting social inclusion, including community centres and community grants. We suggest that the City Council's approach to community engagement and how it meets the needs of Oxford's diverse range of communities should be subject to a separate detailed review.

Homelessness

72. Oxford has one of the highest rates of people experiencing homelessness per capita outside of London and homelessness is a big issue in the city. A number of homelessness services are located in Oxford including 3 large hostels; so many homeless people gravitate towards Oxford from the neighbouring districts. We are concerned that instances of rough sleeping seem to be on the increase. A street count conducted in November 2014 identified 26 rough sleepers, compared to 19 a year earlier. A more recent estimate, drawing on intelligence from local stakeholders, was 43[18]. The City Council spends £1.4m per year on a range of homelessness services, and has committed to protecting the element of this funding that isn't government grant money over the medium term. At the same time, the County Council funding is reducing from £3.8m to £2.3m. The number of bed spaces is being maintained but the quality of support available is likely to drop.

No Second Night Out

73. Healthwatch Oxfordshire raised a number of concerns with us about the Council's No Second Night Out(NSNO) policy, which targets interventions at new rough sleepers, and proposed 5 recommendations for the Panel to consider (see appendix 5). A representative of Healthwatchadvised us that much of the NSNO work on the ground was very good but there were issues with the forceful evictions of rough sleepers despite a lack of available hostel beds, hospital discharge processes, a high turnover of staff, as well as a need to address multiple complex needs.

74. The City Council's Head of Housing Needs reassured us that the first 4 Healthwatch recommendations were adequately coveredwithin current provision and that the County Council has recently consulted on the re-commissioning of homelessness services. However, he agreed with the need for a county wide discharge policy for people experiencing homelessness, as per best practice guidelines. The cost of an additional night in a specialist Mental Health unit can regularly cost as much as £500. There are separate programmes aimed at entrenched rough sleepers, who are not the focus of the NSNO policy.

Complex needs

[18] Non-statutory single homelessness, Oxford City Council, March 2015

75. We heard that new rough sleepers are likely to engage in substance abuse if they haven't already, and many rough sleepers also have mental health problems. Having multiple complex needs means that many are denied access to the services they need. For example, people with mental health issues are unable to access alcohol treatment services and vice versa. The City Council now funds a complex needs service in conjunction with the local CCG and Public Health. We strongly endorse this programme which focuses on those whose needs are not met by the Adult homeless pathway or the supported independent living pathway.

Recommendation12- We recommend that the City Council:

c) Assists in bringing about negotiations with local health, housing and social care commissioners and providers so that a county wide discharge policy for people experiencing homelessness can be adopted as per best practice guidelines,

d) Extends interventions aimed at supporting homeless people with complex needs (e.g. substance abuse and mental health issues), who are often excluded from accessing the services they need.

Food poverty

Food poverty can be defined as the inability to obtain healthy, affordable food: "worse diet, worse access, worse health, higher percentage of income on food and less choice from a restricted range of foods. Above all food poverty is about less or almost no consumption of fruit and vegetables" – Feeding the Gaps[19]

76. Unequal access to nutritious food has a direct bearing on a person's health and general wellbeing. We reviewed areport called Feeding the Gaps, which sets out the findings of a project researching food poverty in Oxford, and spoke to local experts on emergency food aid and surplus food redistribution. We heard that demand for emergency food aid was rising, although this local and national trend is difficult to quantify. The causes of food poverty in Oxford reflect the national picture, and include benefit sanctions and payment delays, low wages and the bedroom tax.

77. The Feeding the Gaps project identified and interviewed a diverse range of providers of food aid in the city, some of which cater for specific groups and others are open to all. The Oxford Food Bank employs an innovative and pioneering model of redistributing surplus food to 45 local food aid providers, 41 of which are based within Oxford. The use of surplus food is saving providers a lot of money and enabling them to provide genuinely healthy and nutritious meals. Currently, only a fraction of local surplus food is being used.

78. Most of these organisations have discarded the idea that providing emergency food aid fosters a dependency culture, instead many have reported that that seeking food aid generates embarrassment and stigma which can prevent people in need from accessing help. Some providers have overcome this problem by creating a strong cultural or community context in which meals are provided.There are lots of co-benefits to providing food aid. Some providers have found it possible to use meals as a way of hooking people into other

[19] D. Barling and T. Lang (2009) in Feeding the Gaps: Food poverty and food surplus redistribution on Oxford, Doireann Lalor, September 2014

services such as legal advice. It is also an effective way of providing people with skills and personal development, and for building communities.

79. Feeding the Gaps identifies a number of possible next steps aimed at building capacity in this sector and changing attitudes to surplus food. We were pleased to learn that funding has been secured to progress some of this follow up work and address the five specific gaps in provision identified in the report:
    - People in areas of deprivation, including Blackbird Leys and Rose Hill
    - Families with Children over 5, who are not eligible for support from Children's Centres
    - People in low-paying jobs
    - People transitioning out of services
    - Asylum seekers and refugees

80. Emergency food aid is not an area that the City Council is directly involved in. However, having heard evidence from those with local knowledge and expertise in this area, we believe there is strong evidence that this should be an emerging area of policy in the City Council's efforts to address inequalities. We want to ensure that the local network is sustainable and can continue to address areas of unmet need. Since the restructuring of the Primary Care Trusts, there has been no network bringing together the local providers of emergency food aid. Prior to this, the City Council was the lead agency. The City Council could again take the lead role in bringing together local food aid providers to better enable them to operate more efficiently as a network, share resources and best practice, and work towards filling the gaps in provision outlined above. The City Council has experience of capacity building in other sectors which it may be able to apply here. There may also be an opportunity to raise providers' awareness of services and support provided by the City Council. We note that Bristol has been cited as an example of best practice in terms of food policy.

    Recommendation13- Oxford City Council is leading the way in defining, measuring and tackling fuel poverty and we recommend that the same priority should be given to the issue of food poverty. A part-time role should be created to tackle food poverty, which should involve facilitating the work of the not-for-profit and voluntary sector to maximise their impact, and developing a food poverty strategy for Oxford. This strategy should aim to replicate best practice established by Bristol to reduce food bank demand and increase access to good and affordable food across the city.

Support for asylum seekers

81. Asylum seekers are a specific group that are likely to be affected by issues of inequality. We spoke to Asylum Welcome, a group that supports refugees, asylum seekers and immigration detainees by providing advice, practical services, human-contact and food. Asylum Welcome receives annual grant funding from the City Council, as well as funding from donations, trusts and foundations. Oxford is not a designated dispersal city and has a relatively small number of asylum seekers. However, the Campsfield House immigration detention centre is nearby and some local people are very active, which means that Oxford is able to punch above its weight and influence the national debate.

82. Asylum seekers are unable to work while their claims are being processed. They are therefore more likely to be dependent on food aid andsome are living destitute in Oxford. Of these, 3 or 4 have the status of having No Recourse to Public Funds which means that they have been through the asylum process as far as they can and are liable for detention and removal, even if they have children. This is a particularly vulnerable and hidden group that falls outside of the remit of Asylum Welcome. We heard that other asylum seekers often find they are turned away from services even when they do have certain entitlements. Many asylum seekers who do have accommodation have reported having tenancy issues.

83. Asylum seekers often need access to legal advice, for example when additional evidence becomes available to support their asylum claim, or when human rights claims are made, which are no longer covered by Legal Aid. Asylum Welcome advised us that there are now fewer lawyers operating in this field and that they have on occasion paid for lawyers.

84. The City Council has made a commitment to Oxford's mission to be a 'City of Sanctuary', and we asked what the Council could doto ensure that Asylum Welcome can remain viable and continue to support asylum seekers in Oxford. We heard that funding from the City Council is currently provided annually and that a longer-term funding settlementwould provide more security and cut their administrative workload. We also heard that Asylum Welcome are paying a commercial rent on their currently premises which is going to increase by over 10%.

Recommendation 14 – We recommend that the City Council:

c) Identifies how it can provide a greater degree of funding security to Asylum Welcome. Consideration should be given to including their work within the remit of the Community Grants commissioning programme, which awards funding for 3 years rather than annually. This will reduce Asylum Welcome's administrative workload and help to ensure that they remain viable over the medium term.

d) Explores whether it could provide low cost accommodation to third sector organisations by utilising unused capacity in Council-owned assets such as Community Centres.

Financialexclusion

85. People who are financially excluded are often in poverty or experiencing disadvantage and as a result they may be unable to access affordable credit or bank accounts, struggle to manage money or pay bills, or are financially at risk. 11% of Oxford's population are indebted[20]. We strongly endorse the City Council's Financial Inclusion Strategy and Action Plan which aims to address issues of debt, income, housing and skills over the short and longer term. The City Council also offers a Council Tax Reduction scheme which people on low incomes may be entitled to and Discretionary Housing Payments.

Welfare reform

[20] Financial Inclusion Strategy, Oxford City Council, 2014

86. Research commissioned by the City Council found that the majority of people affected by welfare reforms in Oxford were in work on low pay. Some 14,950 households were £31 per week worse off on average due to welfare reform and 60% of these household have at least one person in work[21]. Two particular groups of concern were identified; disabled people and lone parents. We endorse the work of the Welfare Reform Team which has been involved in a national pilot project in partnership with Jobcentre Plus, actively helping people affected by welfare reform by providing personal budgeting support.

87. We note that Universal Credit is now being gradually phased in. A claimant's situation on the day of their assessment is what counts in calculating their entitlement, which will present difficulties for those in insecure employment or on zero hours contracts. We heard that this is hugely challenging but that the City Council is one of the best placed local authorities in the UK to support this transition. Weurge the City Council to ensure that as many people as possible experiencing financial exclusion have the opportunity to benefit from the Welfare Reform Team's transformative interventions.

Single view of debt

88. We heard that a number of people in debt owe money to the City Council and often these are multiple debts (e.g. Council Tax, rent, charges). We support moves towards implementing a 'single view of debt' so that these multiple debts can be identified, and where possible consolidated into more manageable single payments.

Independent advice

89. The Citizens Advice Bureau advised us that the four most common issues they deal with nationally relate to debt, benefits, housing and employment. The order and mix of these issues varies in different parts of the country and in Oxford the three main issues of particular concern are:
    I. Housing supply and the quality of the private rented sector,
    II. The benefits system letting down chronically disabled people causing stress and strain,
    III. Poor employment practices causing insecure employment. In particular, the employment rights of new arrivals are not respected and people do not knowwhat they are entitled to.

90. We welcome the City Council's commitment to maintaining the level of funding the advice sector provides in recent budget rounds. To support this vital open-access provision, we would like to see the City Council making a commitment to protect funding for the advice sector over the medium term.

Debt advice

91. We heard from the Citizens Advice Bureau that some debt advice is available but it's not enough. The provision of money management and debt advice needs additional resourcing because funding for the Citizens Advice Bureau to provide this one day a week in the Town Hall is being lost.

[21] The impacts of welfare reform in Oxford, Centre for Economic and Social Inclusion, April 2014, p. 4

Unclaimed entitlements

92. We note that the City Council has provided funding to the Citizens Advice Bureau to help over 60s who don't meet the threshold for social care to claim benefits they were entitled to. This project brought an extra £1m into the local economy, with the average pensioner who benefited being £2-4k better off. We heard that CAB plan to continue this work.

Recommendation 15 - We strongly endorse the City Council's approach to combatting financial exclusion and recommend that the City Council:

- ***f) Ensures that the Welfare Reform Team are fully and best deployed in order to provide greater assistance and proactively reach more people, particularly those moving on to Universal Credit,***
- ***g) Moves towards implementing a 'single view of debt' in order to identify multiple debts owed to the Council, and where possible, consolidate these,***
- ***h) Gives a high priority to continuing to protect the current level of funding for the advice sector over the medium term,***
- ***i) Identifies funding to maintain debt advice provision provided by the Citizens Advice Bureau, which is currently at risk,***
- ***j) Continues to work closely with CAB and other agencies to encourage the take up of unclaimed benefits.***

Support for charities

93. We found that there is a wide range of charities operating in Oxford providing a various types of services and support. In many cases, they are unaware of what other charities and groups are doing andwe heard from Community Action Groups Oxfordshire that there is no reliable local directory of charities. The Charity Commission website provides one option but is not always easy to use.

Recommendation 16– We recommend that the City Council establishes a reliable directory of charities for Oxford, setting out the aims, principle client groups and types of relief provided. This will help to ensure that local charities have a greater awareness of what other charities do.

Helping residents to fulfil their potential

94. City Council interventions can place a key role in helping residents to fulfil their potential and participate fully in society. For example,the Council's Youth Ambition programme aims to help young people to broaden their perception of their own capabilities and stimulate ambition. The City Council has also invested significantly in improving educational attainment in struggling schools and is participating in the Business in the Community scheme where City Council employees provide mentoring to pupils at a city school. We would like the City Council to build on its role as a positive agent for change that can successfully transform residents' lives, particularly for those in areas of deprivation.

Education

95. A number of people we spoke to including the Child Poverty Action Group, highlighted poor educational outcomes in some city schools as being a major

cause for concern as it can perpetuate inequality and entrench intergenerational low aspirations.Education is a County Council function but the City Council has directed substantial resources at improving educational attainment in the city's poorest performing schools over recent years. These investments have been scrutinised elsewhere but we strongly encourage the City Council to remain involved in addressing poor attainment because well targeted intervention can have a real impact in reducing educational inequalities, particularly at Key Stage 1 and key Stage 2. Past difficulties in achieving effective interventions in educations outcomes should not be used as an excuse to disengage. The absolute crucial role educational outcomes play in determining the life course of our children and their exposure to inequality are too great for this area to be overlooked.

Educational grants

96. We suggest that the City Council prioritises offering a new non-prescriptive educational improvement grant programme which is accessible to schools in deprived areas. Head Teachers could for example apply for grant money to fund a specific line item in their School Improvement Plan focused on Pupil Premium or Special Educational Needs pupils. The funding should be output-based so that uses that demonstrate positive impacts are prioritised for further funding.

Promoting take up of the pupil premium

97. We understand that since the introduction of universal free school meals, fewer parents of eligible pupils are registering their children and schools are missing out on pupil premium funding they are entitled to. The County Council is unable to access benefits data to determine which pupils qualify for pupil premium funding and we suggest that the City Council considers whether it has a role in solving this issue.

Recommendation 17- We recommend that the City Council continues to prioritise improving educational attainment in the city by:

- ***c) Offering a new educational grant programme to which Head Teachers from schools in deprived areas can apply. This programme would provide tangible output-based funding to reduce educational inequalities in city schools. The criteria for awards should be non-prescriptive but grants could be used to fund specific line items in School Improvement Plans focused on pupil premium and Special Educational Needs students, for example.***
- ***d) Engaging with partners and considers whether it has a role in ensuring that eligible pupils are registered for the pupil premium so that city schools receive the funding they are entitled to.***

Promoting opportunities

98. The City Council can play an important role in promoting and maximising the opportunities available to residents in areas of deprivation.

Careers Advice in Schools

99. We identified that careers advice in city schools is poor or lacking, particularly at years 7 and 8. While the City Council has no powers in this area, it could seek to exert some influence.

Social clauses

100. The City Council has been using social clauses to ensure that major development projects provide apprenticeship opportunities for young adults living in the more deprived parts of the city. We would like to see further use of social clauses to ensure that the benefits of development and growth are extended to all parts of the city. Assurance is also needed that developers contracted by the City Council deliver these commitments.

Discounts for tutors at community centres

101. We spoke to a social enterprise that was looking to provide an accredited course at Barton aimed at overcoming issues of low self-esteem in 12-15 year old girls and enabling them to build healthy relationships. We recognise that these types of issues require ground up solutions but feel there is a role for the City Council in providing facilitation that helps to make these types of solutions more viable.We note that Blackbird Leys Community Centre now offers substantial discounts to tutors hiring computers and providing educational opportunities. We note that there are plans to offer these discounts at Rose Hill and Barton and would like to see this offer extended to all Community Centres located in areas of deprivation.

Utilising partnerships

102. We suggest that the City Council should encourage more input from university students and sixth formers, including from private schools, in areas such as assisting younger children for whom English is not a first language, and in broadening access to resources such as arts provision.

Recommendation18- We recommend that the City Council utilises skills within communities and works with partners to maximise every opportunity to provide employment and career paths for more residents living in areas of multiple deprivation, including by:

- ***h) Seeking to influence and improve the provision of targeted careers advice in schools, extending this to younger pupils (years 7-8), as well as offering mentoring into adulthood,***
- ***i) Extending the use of social clauses to create more and better opportunities for young people. Clarity is required as to how the City Council will ensure that developers deliver social clauses,***
- ***j) Extending the offer of reduced fees for tutors to all Community Centres situated in areas of multiple deprivations. The City Council should also continue to make better use of Community Centres and promote them as vibrant local hubs.***
- ***k) Maximising links with universities, private schools, the student hub and businesses to get more volunteer help for appropriate programmes. These opportunities could include coaching and mentoring to help vulnerable people into work, assisting young people to whom English is not a first language, and broadening access to resources such as arts provision.***

Employment

103. Oxford benefits from a buoyant economy and high employment but it also has a strong low wage economy, with a lot of low paying and insecure jobs.Poor employment practices in the city were highlighted by a number of people we spoke to including the Citizens Advice Bureau. These include employers paying less than the minimum wage, employing staff on zero hours contracts against their will, and some restaurants charging staff to wait tables. We were also appalled at reports that a number of people in Oxford were arrested on slavery charges in March 2015[22]. We suggest that the City Council seeks to utilise any influence it has in calling for an end to exploitative employment practices in Oxford.

Recommendation 19- We recommend that the City Council calls on local employers to put an end to exploitative employment practices in the city. These include employers charging restaurant staff to wait tables, paying less than the minimum wage, and employing workers on zero hours contracts against their will.

Oxford Living Wage

104. The City Council is committed to promoting the Oxford Living Wage which is set at 95% of the London Living Wage and takes into account the high costs of housing and transport in the city. One of the biggest impacts that could be made on reducing inequality within Oxford is to lift the wages of as many people as possible to the Oxford Living Wage.

105. We spoke with the Living Wage Foundation about how they are developing the Living Wage. There are now 1,500 accredited Living Wage employers nationally. Future developments; include an emerging consumer campaign, similar to the Fairtradecampaign,the introduction of Living Wage hubs in university cities, and an interactive app.

106. The Living Wage Foundation has genuine appreciation for the work of the City Council in this area and wants to work constructively with us. However, there is a tension due to Oxford having its own Living Wage rate which is different from the national rate. For them, this introduces complexity and can be confusing for employers, which runs contrary to what they are trying to do nationally. However, we believe that the very high cost of housing in Oxford necessitates a higher living wage rate than other areas of the country apart from London.

Recommendation 20 – We recommend that the City Council continues to look to raise wages by:

d) Creating a Living Wage Hub in Oxford based around the Oxford Living Wage. This should involve a programme of activities to promote the Oxford Living Wage, and a distinct logo that Oxford Living Wage employers are encouraged to display. Ideally these activities should be led by engaged citizens but they may initially require some officer resource.

e) Identifying a public face of the Oxford Living Wage which could be a member champion.

[22] Seven arrested after warrants carried out - Vale of White Horse and Oxford, Thames Valley Police, March 2015

f) ***Working constructively with the Living Wage Foundation in promoting Living Wage Week and seeking to raise wages and improve working conditions in Oxford, particularly in low paid sectors such as hospitality, health and social care.***

The City Council as an employer

107. The City Council is itself a major employer in the city and can have some limited impact on reducing inequalities through its own employment practices. In discussion with officers we identified measures that could extend employment opportunities at the City Council to the more excluded groups and communities, enabling the Council to build a workforce that is more representative of the diverse communities it serves.

108. We also considered whether there is scope for looking at salaries and the way salary increases are applied. If all employees receive the same percentage pay increase each year then the pay gap between higher paid and lower paid staff increases in cash terms. We suggest that there is a case for looking at increasing salaries of lower paid staff at a higher rate, in order to maintain rather than widen this gap over time.

Recommendation21- We recognise that Oxford City Council is a major employer in the city, and recommend that the City Council continues to develop its own employment practices through:

f) ***More flexible recruitment practices such as accepting CVs and more widespread use of assessment centres,***
g) ***An annual managed calendar of interventions targeting BME and other underrepresented groups,***
h) ***Better targeting of constructive feedback to unsuccessful applicants,***
i) ***Interactive and accessible recruitment webpages with guidance for applicants,***
j) ***Uplifting the salaries of lower paid staff at a higher rate than those of higher paid staff to ensure that the pay gap between them doesn't increase over time.***

Conclusion

109. This cross-cutting review of inequality found that the City Council is doing a lot of very good work to combat persistent patterns of inequality in Oxford. These issues are complex and difficult to solve even with a strong partnership approach. Doing so is particularly challenging, but arguably as important as ever, at a time when public finances are constrained. We have recommended a wide range actions thatwe think and feasible and affordable. Taken together,thesewould enable the City Council to maximise its impact and make a significant additional contribution to combatting inequality in Oxford.

Further consideration

110. We recommend that the Scrutiny Committee should consider adding the following items to its work programme:

a) The Youth Ambition Programme
b) How well the Community and Neighbourhoods Team is meeting the needs of marginalised groups and communities
c) Fuel Poverty – uptake and results of thermal ratings surveys
d) Housing delivery models
e) Public transport costs

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Scrutiny Review of Combatting Inequality – terms of reference

Background
At its meeting on 6 October, the Scrutiny Committee agreed to a proposal to establish a panel to review issues around inequality in Oxford. This panel would draw together and prioritise a number of different but related suggestions put forward by Councillors.The review panel was asked to meet to refine its terms of reference and report back to the Scrutiny Committee for approval. The following terms of reference were drafted by the panel before being agreed by the Scrutiny Committee on 10 November 2014.

Context
Oxford is a dynamic and successful city with relatively low long term employment. However, the cost of living is higher than almost anywhere else in the UK and this presents a number of challenges. Some areas of the City suffer multiple levels of deprivation, with low skills, low incomes and poor housing. The City also has significant numbers of homeless and other vulnerable groups. These challenges have been exacerbated by the effects of the economic downturn and by constrained public spending, and are expected to intensify in the years ahead.

Purpose of the Scrutiny Review
To review how the City Council contributes to combattingharmful social and economic inequality in Oxford, and whether there is more that could reasonably be done.

The central aims of the review are
- To understand the scale, reasons and impact of inequality in Oxford.
- To identify specific areas where the City Council can make the most difference in combatting inequality.
- To make deliverable, evidence-based recommendations thatare co-produced with local citizens or stakeholders where possible.

Other aims include
- Identifying other studies that are currently taking place.
- Understanding the public sector equality role, how this is applied in practice and whether more could be done.
- Drawing on the views and experience of local professionals and non-statutory organisations.
- Seeking external expert perspectives that may challenge conventional thinking.
- Identifying gaps in provision or in partnership working where there are opportunities for the City Council to take a leadership role.
- Testing the claim that Oxford City Council does all it can to make Oxford a fairer, more equal place.

Out of scope
- Commissioning new academic or statistical research.
- Duplicating the work of other agencies such as Oxfordshire Clinical Commissioning Group and Oxfordshire County Council.

- Focusing on areas where the City Council currently has little influence e.g. Children's Centres.

Methodology
Evidence gathering methods include:
- Review of literature, policy documents and research data.
- Call for evidence.
- Evidence provided at public hearings and workshops.
- Undertaking site visits e.g. to a food bank, health centre etc.
- Considering what could be learnt from other local authorities.

Indicative timeline

October 2014
Panel terms of reference considered by Scrutiny Committee on 6 October. Panel members meet to agree area of focus and next steps. Terms of reference updated. Evidence gathering is planned.
November 2014
Review terms of reference considered by Scrutiny Committee on 10 November. Evidence gathering begins.
December 2014 - January 2015
Evidence gathering continues but the Finance Panel's Budget Scrutiny review takes priority.
February 2015
Final evidence gathering takes place. Panel meets to review evidence and identify recommendation areas. Report drafted around recommendation areas.
March 2015
Panel finalise report and recommendations. Report to Scrutiny Committee meeting on 23 March. Recommendations to City Executive Board on 1 April.

Appendix 2 - Acknowledgments

We would like to thank everyone who contributed to the inquiry by taking the time to respond to our call for evidence and share their thoughts, ideas and experiences.

We would also like to give special thanks to the following people who attended public meetings to provide evidence in person:

- From Age UK: Paul Cann
- From Asylum Welcome: Kate Smart and Bob Wilkes.
- From Community Action Groups – Oxfordshire: Peter Lefort.
- From Healthwatch Oxfordshire: Peter Lohman.
- From the Living Wage Foundation: Emma Kosmin
- From Oxford Citizens Advice Bureau: Gill Tishler.
- From Oxford & District Child Poverty Action Group: Larry Sanders and Sue Tanner.
- From Oxford City Council: Jarlath Brine, Councillor Susan Brown, Angela Cristofoli, Mark Fransham, Debbie Haynes, Val Johnson, Luke Nipen, Adrian Roche, Dave Scholes, Peter Sloman and Paul Wilding.
- From Oxfordshire Clinical Commissioning Group: Sharon Barrington, Maggie Dent andDr. Joe McManners.
- From Oxfordshire County Council: Eira Hale
- Doireann Lalor, Co-ordinator of Feeding the Gaps.
- Professor Danny Dorling, social geographer and author.
- Several members of the public who addressed the Panel.

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Appendix 3 – background documents

The Panel has reviewed or had sight of the following public documents, in addition to various briefing notes and presentations provided by City Council officers and external witnesses:

- Corporate Plan 2014-2018, Oxford City Council
- Child Poverty Needs Assessment, Oxfordshire Children & Young People's Trust
- Nowhere to turn? Changes to emergency support, The Children's Society
- Poverty and deprivation statistics, Oxford City Council
- Fair Society Healthy Lives, The Marmot Review
- Feeding the Gaps: Food Poverty and food surplus redistribution in Oxford
- 999 FOOD – Emergency Food Aid in the Thames Valley – A Snapshot, Diocese of Oxford
- Oxford Profile 2015, Oxford Strategic Partnership
- Our Changing City – Social Trends in Oxford, Oxford Strategic Partnership
- Oxfordshire Insight Newsletter November 2014, Oxfordshire County Council
- Equality Act 2010, The National Archives
- Bridging the Social Divide, Social Mobility and Child Poverty Commission
- Oxford District Health Profile 2015, Public Health England
- Why Ethnicity Matters for Local Authority Action on Poverty, Joseph Rowntree Foundation
- State of the Nation 2014: Social Mobility and Child Poverty in Great Britain
- Poverty and the Cost of Living: An Evidence Review, Joseph Rowntree Foundation
- Financial Inclusion Strategy, Oxford City Council
- The Indices of Deprivation 2010, Oxford City Council
- Oxfordshire Joint Strategic Needs Assessment, Health and Wellbeing Board
- Impact of Welfare Reform in Oxford, Centre for Economic and Social Inclusion
- A tale of two counties, Age UK
- Living a life in social housing: a report from the Real London Lives project, Centre for Housing Policy

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Appendix 4 - Responses to call for evidence

Responses from organisations				
Organisation	**Question: 1 What local factors contribute to social and economic inequality in Oxford? (max 2000 characters)**	**Question: 2 To what extent do you agree with the following statement: Oxford City Council works well with partners to combat inequality.**	**Question: 3 Thinking about inequality in Oxford, are there current or emerging areas of unmet need or gaps...**	**Question: 4 What more could the City Council reasonably do to combat inequality? (max 2000 characters)**
Oxford and district Child Poverty Action Group	We focus here on local evidence on child poverty. We see local factors as including housing, transport, planning, employment and education. The price of housing - recently reported to exceed London - is a significant contributor to local inequalities and divisions. It is also difficult for residents in the outer estates of the city to integrate with the rest of the community and have equal access to central facilities, given the price of transport. Planning policies are clearly critically important in the creation and maintenance of mixed communities, which in turn influence the quality of local facilities. In Oxford, 1 in 4 children live in poverty. There is a stark contrast between the north and the SE parts of the city, reflecting the socio-spatial distribution of housing: in 4 areas of SE Oxford, more than 30% do so, compared with 7% in North Oxford. More disadvantaged areas of the city also have poorer health and learning outcomes. Barton and Blackbird Leys have high rates of low birth-weight babies - significantly above the national average, with parts of North Oxford significantly below. Barton and Northfield Brook are in the 5% most deprived areas nationally on the Child Wellbeing Index.	We realise that the city council only has direct powers over only certain services and provision. However, these are important areas where it can act; and it can also be a leader in the local area in its efforts to combat poverty and inequality in partnership with other strategic organisations. It is already doing so in a range of ways we commend. Its pay policy aims to ensure that low-paid workers employed by the council itself and by grant-funded organisations receive a decent wage. The council's continuing support for advice centres also contributes greatly to addressing inequality. In the last full year these centres saw 13,913 clients and helped clients to gain an additional £2.7m. Advice workers helped at least 217 client households to avoid threatened homelessness. The council's policies as a landlord and as a creditor are key in terms of the impact of the authority on some of its poorest residents, and these should all	The withdrawal of legal aid, in particular for family law and welfare benefits, has resulted in the reduction of assistance for many in the most hard-pressed groups. We would urge the city council to provide increased support for advice centres. In addition, certain areas of the city have no local provision: for example, Cutteslowe, Wood Farm, parts of East Oxford. People living in poverty in these areas have to travel to the CAB or elsewhere for help and many find the bus fares prohibitive. There is virtually no advice help available to those in full-time employment. Oxford CAB runs a Saturday morning session but evening and weekend advice sessions elsewhere do not exist. Many people living in poverty cannot read or write English. There is a need for much more provision of interpretation/translation facilities in advice centres and other organisations serving the public.	The city council can tackle child poverty and inequality directly and also tackle their consequences. It should strive to increase the supply of social housing. It should continue to protect families from the impact of national housing policies restricting access and/or income (e.g. the 'bedroom tax'). The council should continue to pay the 'living wage' and protect full council tax support. It should encourage schools to ensure families eligible for free school meals register their children, and support holiday meals initiatives. Council funds for education/educational groups/activities should continue and be targeted at schools in the most disadvantaged areas. It should encourage schools to use the pupil premium to benefit the most disadvantaged pupils. The council should have a local food policy to address the needs of the poorest households, particularly with children - including helping sustain local food retailing capacity near where they live, so food good for health can be bought at affordable prices without having to pay for transport to the centre or outlying superstores. The council could encourage employers to advertise all local job opportunities as open to part-time and flexible working in the absence of convincing reasons against. Parents (especially mothers) would more

	In 2011, 17% of Oxford's households with children had no adult in employment - compared with 11% in the SE region and 14% nationally. Blackbird Leys, Churchill, Northfield Brook and Barton and Sandhills all had rates of over 25%. Barton, Greater Leys and parts of Cowley have high rates of children with below average levels of learning development at age 5. Young people aged 16-24 not in education/employment/training (NEETS) tend to be concentrated in Blackbird Leys, Rose Hill and Greater Leys. Oxford is the lowest performing part of the county for all the main end of key stage attainment measures at primary and secondary schools. 12 primary schools in the city (out of 30) have overall absence rates amongst the highest 20% nationally.	be designed and implemented with combating poverty and inequality as a top priority. The decision to retain full council tax benefit for claimant households has been particularly helpful in preventing some of the dire consequences faced by claimants in other local authority areas (as well as avoiding expensive legal proceedings). We would urge the council to ensure that it does not lower its own threshold for debt recovery activity. The Local Strategic Partnership can be a vehicle for devising and championing innovate schemes to combat child poverty and inequality locally. It should ensure that these areas are sustained as high priorities for action.	The credit unions (Blackbird Leys and Oxford) could be supported strategically to have a wider and more effective reach. This will be particularly important with the advent of universal credit, which will put enormous strain on families' budgeting.	easily find employment meeting their needs, which would reduce child poverty. The council must also support child care for working parents. Local employers could be encouraged to take on local workers where possible, and create the maximum number of apprenticeships, particularly for young people from disadvantaged areas. The council could use the principle throughout its strategy to combat inequality of conducting itself as though the socio-economic duty on public bodies had been included in the Equality Act 2010 as originally planned.
Oxford CAB	1.1 Housing.Pressure on housing stock keeps rents at unaffordable levels for many, especially when combined with local housing allowance levels based on a broader market reference area. Private landlords have little incentive to maintain properties well or manage tenancies properly. If tenants fall behind on rent it can be more beneficial to a landlord to evict the existing tenant, retain their deposit and then bring in a new tenant than to agree a long repayment plan. The City Council is working hard to increase the stock of social housing. Council tax banding could be re-visited. Retaliatory evictions in private rented accommodation is an issue. We recently advised a tenant who used her rent to pay for the elimination of vermin in her privately rented flat when	Oxford City Council has worked well with partners to help combat inequality through: Creation of welfare reform team Funding of front line advice servicesCreation of financial inclusion strategy Targeted funding for regeneration areas Funding based on both geography and community of interest eg older people facing income poverty Keeping the Council Tax Reduction scheme has helped a great many people and we would strongly recommend its continuationCommitment to	Current or emerging needs: Ongoing information and advice services for people facing multiple changes Ongoing support for financial capability, as an integral part of debt processes, as a stand alone input when appropriate, and as part of encouraging unbanked residents to take advantage of more appropriate fee free bank accounts as these become available. In common with CABs across the country Oxford CAB has seen a big increase in the number of clients with Council Tax arrears. I in 5 clients owing money on Council Tax	4.1 Use any purchasing power with utility companies to press for more transparent pricing 4.2 continue to fund agencies that help individuals to get the most out of their energy supplier eg Oxford CAB's work to get a better deal for those on pre-payment meters and the awareness raising sessions run on energy efficiency and ways to tackle fuel poverty 4.3 ensure that suppliers to the Council have good employment practices – eg are not using zero hours contracts 4.4 Encourage suppliers and other local businesses to adopt the living wage. 4.5 For many clients their first knowledge of action being taken against them is when the

	the landlord failed to act and then was evicted for non payment of rent. 1.2. Welfare reform Council has put a lot of effort into supporting residents through benefit cap and under occupancy charges. In many cases however it is the cumulative effect of other changes that are driving inequality:delays between claim and payment date;sanctions; changes in relation to EU claimants; changing the uprating measure. 1.3 Health inequality The number of claimants on Employment and Support Allowance has remained stubbornly consistent in recent years. The benefit regime contributes to widening economic inequality linked to poor health because of: delays in assessment; poor quality assessments which are overturned when challenged; drop in income while awaiting reconsideration of decisions; low level of support from current welfare to work programmes. 1.4 Pressure on employment The detrimental impact of zero hours contracts. CAB advises an increasing number of clients on minimum wage and not paid their essential travel costs, thus bringing their take home pay to a very low level. Many are care workers making a vital contribution to reducing health inequality and need to be properly rewarded for such.	early adoption of eg direct payments of housing benefit in order to get ahead of some of the major changes	also owes money on a credit, store or charge card. Gaps in service provision: Advice areas previously covered by legal aid so: benefits, debt, housing and employment plus large areas of family law	bailiffs arrive at their door. In most of these cases this is because they have moved and mail has not been forwarded onto them. We would suggest DIS and Aof E checks are carried out to ensure that wherever possible cases do not need to be passed to bailiffs. Avoiding bailiff action can help prevent debt problems from escalating and ensure action is not disproportionate to the level of liability. 4.6 Could the City Council consider introducing a health impact assessment process to ensure that all relevant council policies, decisions and resource investments contribute to health improvements. 4.7 Could the Council take a more rigorous approach to the adoption of measures to disincentivise the number of properties that are being bought for investment purposes only and left empty.

Oxford City council*(Board Member)*	poverty,low educational aspirations, low educational attainment in some of the city schools, hard to attract good staff in public sector as house prices very high, too many employers paying minimum wage, possibly discrimination in employment,NHS surgeries should do more outreach work to spot health problems early.	Difficult as a district council but more work needed to combat health and educational inequalities. More needed to help NEETS in the city as many need mentors job clubs and support of another adult to access opportunities. job club needed at Bullingdon /peat Moors as there are 160 NEETS in Lye Valley according to Oxon CC	The football field at Peat Moors will not be marked out by the City Council as there is a pitch at Cowley Marsh. This centralisation of facilities is a severe discouragement to the socially disadvantaged in Wood FarmChurchill ward and lye valley. The community centre at peat moors is small although the population is increasing. The other part of my ward Horspath lacks a community centre and the opportunity for exercise and social interaction that go with that.	Fund the marking out of the football pitch at Bullingdon /peat moors to encourage exercise and reduce health inequalities. Work with bus companies to improve access to new BBL pool from Hollow way area. Continue work to improve educational attainment as well as the youth ambition scheme. Try to work more closely with Pakistani origin community to encourage them into sport and community participation.Introduce language classes for those who wish to improve language skills
The Porch	a sever lack of affordable housing, an extremely expensive private rented sector and further cuts on the way. The Private rented sector being dominated by wealthy tenants therefore excluding the less well off.	Our experience of working with the city council has always been a very positive one. At The Porch we seek to support those who are homeless into accommodation and The council has always supported us in our efforts.	HOUSING I think that the council should turn to its colleagues and partners to help lift the burden. There is only so much a council can do, if there is still a need then others should share the responsibility	Offer incentives to big institutions who choose to let property at the Market rate. Maybe a tax, a tax concession something like that. There is only so much that the council can provide and so in times like this they should be looking to distribute the burden.
HealthWatch Oxfordshire	*See separate letter. The following documents were also included:* *Improving Hospital Admission and Discharge for People who are Homeless* *Standards for Commissioners and Service Providers*			
My Life My Choice	The submission comes in the form of a short film featuring people with learning disabilities highlighting the stigma and disadvantage they sometimes face. Here is a link to view the film https://vimeo.com/112900434			
Oxfordshire County Council	Oxfordshire County Council work really hard, together with the City Council, inpartnership, to combat inequality in the city. We put a lot of effort into making sure that our work is evidence based and focused on need. To this end we usethe JSNA as a basis for our decision making. The JSNA data set is refreshed, on an on-going basis, and the annual report will bepresented to the March meeting of the Oxfordshire Health and Wellbeing Board. In the meanwhile you can see the most up to date version here. In additionyou can find the equalities briefing, prepared to assist managers in considering equalities issues when redesigning services, here. You can also access ourService and Community Impact Assessments (SCIA's) covering our main budget proposals.			

Responses not from organisations			
Question: 1 What local factors contribute to social and economic inequality in Oxford? (max 2000 characters)	**Question: 2 To what extent do you agree with the following statement: Oxford City Council works well with partners to combat inequality.**	**Question: 3 Thinking about inequality in Oxford, are there current or emerging areas of unmet need or gaps...**	**Question: 4 What more could the City Council reasonably do to combat inequality? (max 2000 characters)**
Poverty, lack of housing, extreme differences in educational attainment.....	We don't work well enough with the County Council, especially on schools. We need to exercise even more influence over the NHS.	Great differences in life expectancy. Educational attainment Housing.	Build more homes and get others to do so, e.g. enforce 50% affordable housing from developers. Work better with the County and the NHS/OCCG. Do much more effective signposting, e.g. ALL our staff need to know how to direct residents to services and how to alert serives to people in need. Improve the operation of our CaN Dept. Our tenancy support officers should actually SUPPORT and not just concentrate on reducing rent defaulting. Campaign for a change in the council tax bands -- and against welfare benefits delays and over-harsh sanctions etc.
Exorbitant prices, rents and travel costs, and many people earn a wage that is well below a locally specific living wage. Oxford is my home and I feel that I'm being pushed out because of rent and house prices, in addition to poor quality properties. Budget squeezing and tightening belts due to the national governments austerity programme obviously exacerbate the widening chasm between the two poles of the socio-economic spectrum.	But I feel that the local council don't have enough resources to act on inequality even if it wanted to		commit to a regional living wage, restrain increasing rent prices and build more social housing. Lobby west minister against austerity, which makes no logical sense in periods of recession and small growth. AND SCRAP THE BEDROOM TAX!!!
A major factor would be the housing market, both the high price and poor quality are issues. I know many people who grew up in Oxford and feel priced out of their hometown, these are often people with degrees and decent jobs. I feel the city is in danger of becoming a mini London in this		The city suffers from the large scale cuts to public services caused by the governments free market centric economic agenda.	Act to regulate the housing market and build more good quality social housing rather than paying housing benefit directly to private landlords.

regard as more areas become gentrified pushing ordinary working people to the outskirts.			
Lack of interim opportunities for recovery from illness/ ESA/ start work.		There are very few day services for chronically mentally ill people people. We just want a place to get together for a cuppa and a bite of lunch. People make friends for life, build independent support networks, just get through a difficult day. Surprisingly cheap, so effective. It helps people create social solutions that endure beyond statutory service provision.	Restore some of the middle ground that has been destroyed through funding cuts, in particular childcare services and learning opportunities.
Unaffordable housing			Increase availability of affordable housing. Not only for those on the lowest incomes, but also those on middle incomes, as they too cannot afford to live in the city.
If you are poor you do not need to be deprived by the action of the Council taking your easily accessable leisure centre away. This applies to Rose Hill	The amazing increase in population in the Cowley area and I suspect elsewhere, will have produced increased overcrowding. These are the very people who need to have easy access to leisure facilities yet the Council has decided to take the existing facilities away ! Certainly this will increase inequality.	Over crowding increasing	Not sure - but it would help to keep Temple Cowley Pools and Gym
Unemployment, low wages, poor housing conditions in some area		More teaching assistants in schools, more social housing, encourage businesses to offer more apprenticeships	Block unnecssary redevelopment, especially where it forces the elderly to move.
Unemployment, homelessness. low wages			
	The University has some of the country's most notable thinkers in the sphere of inequality. Most of these academics live within the city (Danny Dorling is in Marston for heaven's sake!), making them relatively easy to engage with and liable to want to engage in efforts to improve their locality. Moreover, academics are always looking for ways to apply their theories	Housing. Improve the availability of affordable housing. Come up with innovative ways to restrain the increase in house prices. Rethink the punitive policies toward people who live on the city's waterways. Education. I don't have kids and don't have experience of studying in Oxford, so can't comment on these. But, what does the council have against users of the city's public library? No toilets?	Much more public engagement. Please recognise that even phrases like 'inequalities' exclude people from the discussion because while these terms are familiar to Guardian readers and may convey a meaning to people already engaged in issues related to 'inequalities', they are far from vernacular. Try expressing what you mean, and try to make this comprehensible and inclusive to everyone. It might clear up some of your own thinking around these issues too, since it seems to me that what the city council could and should be interested in is not 'inequality' (partly because

	to the 'real world'. Has the city council made any effort to work with academics whose area of interest is inequality?	REALLY? Spare me the excuses, find a solution, it's not that difficult. Public libraries still represent a gift to our future – help people use it by giving them some basic facilities. Transport. Rethink. Make things better for people who don't own cars. Improve the facilities for cyclists. Social exclusion. People with disabilities still have a hard time in Oxford – try taking a wheelchair into Christ Church meadow, or along the towpath on the opposite side of the river. Also, Oxford has a huge problem with homelessness and I'm not at all convinced that recent posters telling people not to give money to people on the streets did anything to improve this issue, or to improve people's understanding of it. Health. The work has not even begun in Oxford.	much of the determinants of this are utterly beyond the council's control, also because I doubt very much that you will be considering doing anything so bold as to challenge those people who enjoy the benefits of being at the upper end of the inequality), but rather something more like 'how to improve the experience of living in Oxford for people on lower incomes'. Once you have the subject for consideration clear you could try taking it out into forums where you might be able to discuss it with some of the people whom (I assume) you are hoping to benefit. I am fairly confident that these forums will not include the consultation pages of the Oxford City Council website.
High rents and house prices; low income; inadequate access to health and fitness facilities; limited education and job opportunities		Temple Cowley - now deprived of swimming and fitness facilities with the closure of Temple Cowley Pools and Fitness Centre. The new Leys pool is less accessible for all residents of Cowley, Lye Valley, Cowley Marsh and similar areas.	Re-open Temple Cowley Pools to allow residents of all ages and abilities to resume swimming to improve their health and fitness.
Lack of powers or will (?) to introduce more progressive council tax to redistribute wealth in Oxford (massive wealth in the city); lack of council owned affordable housing; growth policy driven by profit motive of big organisations rather than social need (unemployment in Oxford is low and high tech jobs don't necessarily benefit local people) which draw in more people from outside resulting in increasing pressure on house prices so local people are pushed further and further out ; greed driven developments which fail to provide	I think OCC tries hard in many ways eg service delivery, living wage, partnership work at local level - but is constrained by outdated approach to growth, lack of local powers to make changes, structural problems and national policy	Affordable housing is the major need. Building council housing that is not sold to private individuals would be a much more efficient way of meeting housing need then endless housing developments of luxury properties to serve the needs of rich knowledge elite with minor provision for affordable housing.	To answer that question I would need to know what powers OCC has that it could use. A consultation like this should provide relevant information, as well, so we can provide a properly informed response What i can say that inequality is a major issue in Oxford and is recognised widely (including by the IMF) as a constraint on growth

adequate social housing and attract more people making it more and more unaffordable for local people; divided social networks; major institutions employees do not reflect social and ethnic mix of city			
1.Oxford's geographical situation: a. proximity to London, which results in large numbers of commuters many of whom have high (London) incomes, which pushes up house prices and creates exclusive social ghettos (North Oxford, Jericho, Boar's Hill). b. position on a flood plain, which restricts available residential land (the problem is becoming worse with man-made climate change leading to increased flood events). 2. A strong low-wage economy in the city centre because of the Oxford colleges. 3. Related to 2, a lack of other unskilled or semi-skilled jobs in Oxford, esp. in the relatively limited presence of traditional industry. 4. Related to 1a, highly variable quality in primary and secondary provision. Personally, having recently visited five primary schools in East and South Oxford, I was angered and depressed by how very poor Rose Hill primary was by comparison with the others.	I'm not qualified to comment on this.	Given how much service provision must have changed in the last year or so, with all the funding cuts, I don't feel qualified to comment on this. I'm glad we have good Children's Centres around the city; I think that more can always be done in early years provision and intervention, in order to prevent the problems we know result in later life if children's welfare and education is not addressed. Given governmental attacks on the poor and the disabled, there are bound to be problems of unmet need and gaps in provision for these groups, to which a holistic approach should be taken.	As above, work on ante-natal and early years guidance and support is surely essential.
Landlords privately renting to University students are an absolute abomination to the community. Let these students be housed in university accommodation and allow locals decent affordable rentals and the ability to get on the housing ladder. It is also shaming to Oxford, of all places, that the state school system is so poor. Bring back grammar schools, bring back decent standards of education and schools' ability to adequately and daringly discipline students and parents who bring down the standards for all students. Poor education contributes enormously to inequality.	I have little evidence to support my view burt suspect, as in most things, large amounts of money are wasted on publicity, management - and not spent at the grass roots level where it is most needed.	Yes. Health, Education, Housing - it's an embarrassment to Oxford that our standards compare so poorly to elsewhere.	Stop allowing landlords to take up the vast majority of available housing and allowing these people to become rich by downgrading the areas their houses are in. The housing is usually scruffy, locals have to put up with noisy, irresponsible students and it is impossible for young working people to get on the housing ladder. Also, Stop overloading the Council's employment sector with overpaid and inefficient managers

Limited job opportunities which pay a living wage. The high cost and low availability of housing. The punitive effect of national government budget restrictions on local councils.		Affordable housing.	Take all possible steps to maintain public provision of youth services, libraries, pools and sports centres. Defend the public realm from mall developments which offer excessive space to income generating commercial activity.
Access to decent affordable housing and good schools.	Oxford City Council appears to be more motivated by profit than by protecting the interests of residents. The universities are allowed to buy up and build accomodation. They have access to a variety of sports and leisure centres while some of ours are being closed.	Public transport is extremely expensive in Oxford, this restricts the movement of those that cannot afford a car although driving in Oxford is such a nightmare these days. Focusing on efficient and effective local transport would really open up possiblitiesesp in satelite areas such as Barton and Greater Leys. Connections to local towns such as Abingdon shoudbe improved.	Primarily by building affordable housing, introducing fair rents policy and penalising those who buy properties and can afford to leave them empty.
Inadequate, affordable housing. High student population contributing to affordable housing shortage. High cost of living - comparable to London. Too many zero-hours and short-term contracts. Failure of employers to implement a Living Wage. Sub-contracting by organisations, including the local hospitals, to agencies, that pay low hourly rates, and sack people without the right of appeal. Insufficient resources allocated to people with mental health problems. Poor health outcomes for families on low incomes. Closure of family centres. Lack of investment in community centres.	Where would evidence of this collaboration be found?	See above	Moratorium on new student accommodation. Limit HMOs. Invest in more affordable housing. Offer incentives to employers to pay Living Wage. Restore area parliaments to allow greater local involvement. Encourage more employers to recruit people with mental health problems and disabilities. Refuse to comply with Austerity agenda of present government!
Poor housing - mostly in the PRS, with high rents and some appallingly low standards. Low education attainment, with the added disadvantage of poor careers advice for young people, meaning school leavers often do not have the skills businesses look for. Low esteem - particularly where the levels	The scale of Inequality is not fully identified. More information needs to be sifted through a literature review.	Asylum seekers is an area of unmet need - as there is a prohibition on public funding of needs.	Overcome silos and joined up thinking is where I'd like to start. But listening to service users is vital in identifying gaps.

of multiple deprivations grind down confidence through the despondency rejection causes. Fragmented communities and social isolation, with low or poorly established soft networks.			
Extremely rich people are starting to buy houses in Oxford that they may regard largely as investments. Even if they are seldom here, their large houses remind people of them. The social cohesion that used to exist because almost everyone attended their local church has largely been lost and there is no adequate substitute [I am not a regular church-goer myself]. People do not know many of their neighbours.		I am not well enough informed to give a useful answer.	I am not convinced that it is the City Council's job to combat inequality. It should ensure that the same services are available to all who need them and not go beyond that.
Affordability of housing, both rented and bought. Educational inequality, in particular of outcomes. Skill/employability factors.		Service provision does not seem an adequate response - inequality in Oxford is growing deeper than ever. A range of fundamental issues are unlikely to be handled in the short term, but drastic increases in the number of houses would be a start, as would policies that would cut the costs of that housing, whether it is rent or mortgages. Wealth taxes and land value taxes are probably beyond the immediate scope of the City Council, but would help. Addressing the range of educational outcomes across the city's state and private schools should be a priority; they are an obscenity.	
The cost of belonging to a sports centre, parking in Oxford, bus fares.		Disabled access to some shops and restaurants	I don't know

Income, where you live (for example North Oxford vs. Wood Farm, where I live), what local schools are available (state and private), state of employment or unemployment, colour of skin/race and ethnic background, whether or not you have a disability etc. (Having said that, the council should be commended for maintaining the green spaces in Wood Farm -- they do an excellent job in cutting grass, trimming hedges, etc. -- and this contributes to the sense of pride of the people who live here).	I think given its limited resources, OCC works reasonably well, but it could do more.	Perhaps more support for women and children from other countries, for whom English is not a first language. More awareness of the needs of disabled people. Is there a Council subcommittee on which disabled people sit and can represent the views of that very diverse commuinity?	I'm afraid I don't have any concrete ideas, but I would like to see children whose first language is not English receive more personal tuition in schools, more programmes aimed at teenagers who at present are at risk of getting into trouble because they just hang around with no purpose.
Government austerity cuts to services. Also concerned at inability of young people to stay in education - both further and higher.	City council tries its best in difficult circumstances and has the right priorities in focusing on the poorest areas.	Concerned about elderly isolation, given the paucity of free centres for the elderly to attend.	This is difficult. We need more revenue to develop projects for young people and also the elderly. Concerned what 5 more years of austerity would do.
Oxford had the worst performing Keystage 1 schools in the country, and has already taken action - see below.	Local schools are key to combatting inequality, and the city has made a good start that must be built on.	A massive, current unmet need for increasing literacy hours for Keystage 1 pupils up to 20 hours weekly for those that need it, which I got in 1958.	Read and understand the following and act accordingly. Oxford City Council recently took action to improve literacy in Oxfords infant schools, even though schools are a County responsibility. This action can be improved enormously if the reasons for failure are properly understood. The reasons for literacy failure are the loss of teaching time due to the introduction of 'small set' or 'ability set' teaching methods that divide classes, but more importantly divide and lose teaching time actually received by pupils. If this situation is confronted directly and successfully, not only will inequality be dealt with at source in the City, but can also be used to inform the rest of the country and the world - Oxford has hosted several Global Literacy Summits in recent years to address the recognised global literacy crisis. If the hours are returned then those who have no home education ethos can also be taught very well - as I was. Teaching by multiple sets in a single classroom

plainly reduces teaching vastly, compared to whole class teaching. In private schools they maintain the hours to make sets work. The state system has never done that.

PARAMETERS, VARIABLES AND COMPARATORS. THE PARAMETERS. (THE VARIABLES ARE MISSING, AND CAN BE SUPPLIED BY INFANT SCHOOLS).

1. Teaching week hours = around 21.

2. Weekly time allotted for literacy = ?

3. Sets per LITERACY class = ? (my son had 5 in 1994, thus losing 80 percent minimum teaching time compared to me in 1958).

4. Pupil literacy teaching hours received = literacy time divided by sets. ? Obtaining the above from schools will give the following info –

5. Time wasted per pupil due to number of sets = THIS IS THE PROBLEM.

The point is that from 80 to 95 percent of infant literacy teaching has been lost to pupils since so called 'Ability Sets' or small group teaching was introduced in the 1960's.

The 'time wasted' was once learning time until classes were divided into small sets.

THREE COMPARATORS.

1. My infant school in 1958-59 gave 20 hours weekly for literacy. Giving approx 1,500 between ages 5 and 7, in whole class teaching.

2. Statutory Law for Infant Literacy Hours. The bare minimum used to be 5 hours weekly, which obviously would be for the top achievers. Lower achievers would get more and lowest 20 hours, what I got. Statutory Law was removed by New

			Labour in 2009. 3. The 'Oxford Experiment' which shows how efficiently I and millions were taught in the 1950's - the 'Oxford experiment' method does not waste time teaching sets independently of each other if they can benefit by being included. Being 'included' can increase teaching time by 500 to 600 percent without increasing the school day. link - http://www.oxfordmail.co.uk/news/10768444.Kick_starting_children_s_enthusiasm_for_learning/ DO THE EXERCISE. Whatever variables are supplied from infant schools, it will be very easy to see that 'time received for literacy' by pupils aged 5 to 7 will fall far far short of the time indicated in the 'comparators'. Note - Statutory Law 5 hours weekly and 'Oxford Experiment' 45 minutes daily are both inadequate amounts of time for most pupils. If anything is unclear or you need more information please contact me. The Oxford Mail has printed several of my letters concerning literacy, search for S.NICHOLSON OXFORD LITERACY within Oxford Mail website. Please publish as wide as possible. Thank you.

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Oxford City Council Inequality Scrutiny Panel
Oxford City Council
St Aldate's
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OX1 1BX

30th January 2015

Dear Oxford City Council Inequality Scrutiny Panel,

This submission to your current consultation is from the board of Healthwatch Oxfordshire, one of over 140 local Healthwatch organisations across the country. Whether it's improving them today or helping to shape them for tomorrow, Healthwatch Oxfordshire is all about local voices being able to influence the delivery and design of local health and social care services. One of our board directors, Richard Lohman, has brought this matter to our attention and on behalf of the board I am pleased to forward his recommendations to you. I would be most grateful if the Inequality Scrutiny Panel would review this submission and assist local health, housing and social care commissioners and providers with considering the implementation of its five recommendations. This submission feels particularly timely due to the recent county council budget cuts agreed for homeless services.

I note from the record of your December meeting that the current commissioning model and consequent delivery of the 'No Second Night Out' (NSNO) service prioritises the visibility of homeless people over their needs and we are concerned that this might be having a negative impact on the appropriate discharge of people experiencing homelessness from hospital. The board is aware of the excellent work carried out by the NSNO staff on the ground in the city however there is concern that they could be constrained in their efforts by the priority dictated by the current policy, as could many dedicated local hospital NHS staff. There is concern that maintaining this priority of visibility over need together with the current model of 'strict verification' is causing both inappropriate discharge and delays in discharge as well as unnecessary re-admission to hospital of people experiencing homelessness. We understand that the 'best practice' that No Second Night Out is quoted as stemming from is not compatible with Oxford or the rest of the county. This is because it stems from a pilot in London which has significant differences between its health, housing and social care systems and those of Oxford and Oxfordshire.

Recommendation one: That the Inequality Scrutiny Panel assist in bringing about negotiations with local health, housing and social care commissioners and providers so that the current NSNO policy priority is changed to one of need over visibility and the verification process is amended

to enable speedier hospital discharge and ease of hostel access for the most needy homeless cases.

Recommendation two: That the Inequality Scrutiny Panel assist in bringing about negotiations with local health, housing and social care commissioners and providers so that a number of bed spaces within each of the city's hostels is allocated for the specific discharge from hospital of the most needy people experiencing homelessness.

Both these recommendations will require further co-operative work with the Oxford University Hospitals Trust as they will need to update their electronic admissions process so that more information is gathered than at present. We understand that the electronic admissions system currently only registers homeless people as being NFA, rather than as recommended within current good practice guidelines i.e. if sofa surfing then at which address and if rough sleeping then in which location. These guidelines are attached and have previously been provided to each of the OUHT, OCCG, the County Council Health and Wellbeing Board and to Stuart Bell, the chief executive of Oxford Health NHS Foundation Trust.

The board is also concerned that the current commissioning model and delivery of the 'No Second Night Out' service appears to create inequality of access to Local Authority assessment of people presenting as homeless. The consequence of this appears to be that people experiencing homelessness are being hindered in their right to a written decision from the local authority on their application as a person experiencing homelessness.

Recommendation three: That the Inequality Scrutiny Panel bring this matter to the attention of the local authority so that they may undertake a review and seek the views of homelessness stakeholders to enable a more rights based approach to be adopted.

It has also come to the board's attention that despite the severe lack of hostel bed space availability people sleeping rough are being forcefully evicted from their camps.

Recommendation four: That the Inequality Scrutiny Panel consider strongly suggesting that this practice is stopped until bed spaces are available within the current hostel stock.

Recommendation five: That the Inequality Scrutiny Panel assist in bringing about negotiations with local health, housing and social care commissioners and providers so that a county wide discharge policy for people experiencing homelessness can be adopted as per best practice guidelines.

Healthwatch Oxfordshire looks forward to the Inequality Scrutiny Panel's review of this submission and if the Panel requires any further information or clarification please do not hesitate to contact its office at the address above.

Yours faithfully

Jean Nunn-Price

Chair
Healthwatch Oxfordshire Board of Directors

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Inequality Scrutiny Panel - Overview of Oxford City Council's contribution to combatting inequality

Work & Lead Service (Officer)	Description	Identified gaps / opportunities (*Previous Scrutiny recommendations in italics*) (Call for evidence responses are shaded)
Meeting Housing Needs		
Increasing the supply of affordable housing Housing and Property (Dave Scholes)	• Delivery of new social housing at Barton and elsewhere. • Policy of 50% affordable housing in new developments.	• Attracting ethical or institutional investors into the city to rent quality accommodation at affordable rates. • Explore different models of housing that are more versatile and affordable. • Further consideration of factors around inequality and public health in the planning and development of sites. • Increasing the variety of housing within new street scenes. • Review balance of dwellings policy. • *Explore how the City Council can become a more agile operator in the housing market to ensure it secures best value for new property acquisitions (agreed in part).* • *Pursue 'real asset lettings' at a pace.* • Enforce 50% affordable housing from developers. • Offer incentives to big institutions that choose to let property at affordable prices. • House students in student accommodation. • Moratorium on new student accommodation.
Increasing occupancy Housing and Property (Bill Graves)	• Incentives offered to tenants to 'downsize' (Removal and Expenses Scheme). • Mutual exchange scheme.	• Better exploit the benefits of Homeshare schemes. • *Research to understand 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.* • *Prioritising 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.* • *Promote the National Home Swap scheme.* • Penalise those who buy properties and can afford to leave them empty.

Work & Lead Service (Officer)	Description	Identified gaps / opportunities (*Previous Scrutiny recommendations in italics*) (Call for evidence responses are shaded)
Homelessness interventions Housing and Property (Dave Scholes)	• Presenting options in cases of statutory homelessness. Around half of the new requests received come from new or emerging households. Increasingly, people have to be placed outside of Oxfordshire. • Tenancy sustainment activities, working with more difficult groups such as vulnerable people and those with anti-social behaviours. • Funding to agencies that support rough sleepers. This includes working to improve people's soft skills and CV writing, prior to volunteering and eventually paid work. • Part-funding the provision of debt solutions. • Homelessness Strategy: No second night out (NSNO), accommodation procurement.	• Monitoring County Council cuts to the Adult Homelessness Pathway and intervening to get the best results from any changes. • Strengthen support for entrenched rough sleepers. • Building better links with universities and business to get more volunteer help with programmes such as coaching and mentoring to help vulnerable people into work. • Assist in changing the current NSNO policy priority to one of need over visibility and the verification process to enable speedier hospital discharge and ease of hostel access. • Assist in ensuring that a number of hostel bed spaces are allocated for the specific discharge from hospital of the most needy people experiencing homelessness • Review NSNO and seek the views of homeless stakeholders to enable a more rights based approach to be adopted. • The practice of forcefully evicting camps of rough sleepers is stopped until hostel bed spaces are available. • Assist in bringing about a county wide discharge policy for people experiencing homelessness as per best practice guidelines.
Landlord Services Bill Graves (Landlord Services Manager)	• Property adaptations • Garden Scheme • Concessions for blue badge holders on garage rental • Major projects such as Tower Blocks	
Housing standards (Council housing stock) Housing and Property (Martin Shaw)	• Raising the standards of our housing stock with the adoption and delivery of an Oxford Standard which is higher than the Decent Homes standard.	
Housing standards (private rented sector)	• HMO licencing (non-mandatory). • The development of a Private Rented Sector Strategy to improve standards in this sector.	• Consider viability of rent controls. • Extension of HMO scheme to single household properties.

Work & Lead Service (Officer)	Description	Identified gaps / opportunities (*Previous Scrutiny recommendations in italics*) (Call for evidence responses are shaded)
Environmental Development (Ian Wright)	• Project tackling unlawful dwellings (Beds in Sheds).	• *Extend funding for Beds in Sheds beyond September 2015 (agreed).* • Limit the number of HMOs.
Estates regeneration City Development (Fiona Percy)	• Great Estates Programme • Blackbird Leys regeneration programme • Tower Block Programme	• Block unnecessarily developments that force the elderly to move.
Work on reducing **Fuel Poverty** Environmental Development (Joe Carr/ Debbie Haynes)	• Appointed to post for energy/fuel poverty strategy. • Establishing energy targets for property on carbon reduction, energy efficiency. • Investing to improve thermal efficiency in the Council's housing stock. • Free energy audit for every tenant. • Development of an Energy and Water Strategy. • Funding the Affordable Warmth Network free helpline.	• *Tenant-facing Direct Services staff encouraged to offer appropriate advice on the use of free electricity (agreed).*
CreatingOpportunities		
Youth Ambition Strategy Leisure, Parks and Communities (Ian Brooke)	The strategy focuses on 15-21 year olds, and our approach is to engage young people in positive activities and by doing so help them to broaden their perception of their own capabilities and to stimulate ambition and positive insertion into the community. These activities include: • Targeted free swimming. • Youth Ambition Grants programme to proactively seek applications from organisations aiming to reduce Child Sexual Exploitation and Extremism as well as applications supporting increased educational attainment and increasing the power and influence young people have over services that affect their transition into adulthood. • Positive Futures Holiday Activities Fund - applications were invited from suitably qualified and experienced	• Investigate the feasibility of recruiting a women and girls participation officer to increase female representation / engagement across the programme and to also support vulnerable young people to stay safe, reduce risky behaviours and as a result reduce the risk of young people being either victims or perpetrators of crime. • Increased training for all delivery staff enabling them to identify risk indicators and increased links to Thames Valley Police and Public Health to refer young people to specialist services when required. • Increased training for young people supporting them to effectively engage with democratic processes and be the change they want to see in their communities. • Continue to develop the partnership agreement with the county Council to ensure effective high quality

Work & Lead Service (Officer)	Description	Identified gaps / opportunities (*Previous Scrutiny recommendations in italics*) (Call for evidence responses are shaded)
	organisations and individuals to deliver activities for young people in Barton, Wood Farm, Blackbird Leys & Greater Leys, Littlemore, Rose Hill, Cowley Marsh and East Oxford. • Youth Ambition Sports – multi-sports sessions are delivered on the doorstep of the following regeneration areas: Barton, Blackbird Leys, Cutteslowe, Rose Hill and Wood Farm. Sessions are free or a nominal fee is in place, which helps engage young people and break down barriers to participation. Girls' only sessions are delivered to provide a welcoming space for young women. Sports sessions also offer training and volunteering opportunities. Session leaders/instructors support young people to identify and access positive exit routes/pathways. • Positive Futures and Sports sessions are delivered by session leaders (recruited by OCC). There is now a tiered approach to recruitment; future leader, session leader and team leader – this provides the opportunity for young / less experienced people to get in to work and develop their skills. • Youth Voice – developing Area Youth Action Teams in our regeneration areas supporting young people to identify projects they want to carry out to improve their community and more actively engage with Council processes, supporting us to develop services that genuinely meet their needs. Young people from vulnerable groups now sit on the Youth Ambition Grant Panel, the Positive Futures Holiday Fund and the Youth Partnership Board and are actively engaged in the development, delivery and review of projects and services.	activities for young people within the city
EducationalAttainment	• KRM Programme of work to raise attainment in primary	• Extend shared equity loan scheme to more teachers.

Work & Lead Service (Officer)	Description	Identified gaps / opportunities (*Previous Scrutiny recommendations in italics*) (Call for evidence responses are shaded)
Policy and Partnerships Team (Val Johnson)	schools in Oxford City • Leadership Programme for schools. • Pilot co-production project with two secondary schools in East Oxford around parental engagement and homework. • Shared equity loan scheme for head teachers.	• *Any future City Council educational programmes are co-designed with schools and are cohesively focused on achieving long term improvements in educational attainment and reductions in inequalities (agreed).* • Encourage schools to ensure families eligible for free school meals register their children, and support holiday meal initiatives. • Funds for education should continue and be targeted at the most disadvantaged areas. • Encourage schools to use the Pupil Premium. • More teaching assistants in schools. • Improve facilities at public libraries (e.g. toilets). • Bring back grammar schools, decent standards and schools ability to discipline children and parents who bring down that standards for all students. • Increase literacy hours for Keystage 1 pupils up to 20 hours weekly for those that need it. • Abolish 'ability sets' / small group teaching. • Children whose first language is not English should receive more personal tuition in schools. • More programmes aimed at teenagers who at present are at risk of getting into trouble.
Business in the Community Policy and Partnerships Team (Val Johnson)	• Providing Education/Business Links to schools, including mentoring, placements and other support. Over 30 City Council staff volunteered as mentors.	
Employment and Skills Policy and Partnerships Team (Val Johnson, Neil	• Links to Employment & Skills Board, City Deal and European Structural Investment Funding. • Programme of work to increase skills and employability opportunities for less advantaged individuals. • Particular focus on large developments including Barton, Westgate and Northern Gateway. • Development of Employment and Skills plans with key stakeholders including developers to drive agenda forward.	• Seek to improve and influence the provision of targeted careers advice in schools and intervene earlier (years 7-8). No replacement for the Connexions service. • Scale up interventions that extend the benefits and opportunities of development to the whole city (see apprenticeships). • Further use of social clauses to create more and better opportunities for young people living in areas of

Work & Lead Service (Officer)	Description	Identified gaps / opportunities (*Previous Scrutiny recommendations in italics*) (Call for evidence responses are shaded)
		deprivation. Clarity required as to how the Council will ensure that developers deliver social clauses. • Funding to extend Employment and Skills Programme beyond May 2015. • Encourage academies to remove barriers at age 16. • Encourage employers to advertise all local job opportunities as open to part time and flexible working in the absence of convincing reasons against. • Lack of interim opportunities for recovery from illness/ESA/start work. • A lack of unskilled and semi-skilled jobs in Oxford. • Encourage more employers to recruit people with mental health problems and disabilities.
Apprenticeships Human resources (Jarlath Brine)	• Targeted recruitment of apprentice cohorts to OX1-OX4 postcodes and underrepresented groups. • Equalities/ Apprentices Officer member of Oxfordshire Apprenticeship Group. • 25 Apprentices employed directly by the City Council.	• Ensure that the creation of sustainable OX1-OX4 apprenticeships is built into all major procurement contracts (e.g. Barton/ Westgate/ Northern Gateway) • Apprentice webpage. • *Reinstate £50k from 2015/16 or a sufficient amount to fund no fewer than 25 apprentices in future cohorts (not agreed).* • *We recommend that the City Council seeks to increase apprentice pay in the next budget round (not agreed).*
Job clubs Neighbourhood Services (Angela Cristofoli)	• Grants provided to job clubs.	• There is a need to identify a sustainable funding stream. Currently proposals are being developed for an ESF bid but the future is uncertain. • More interventions to help NEETS as many need mentors and job clubs (esp. in Lye Valley where there are 160 NEETS).
City Council Employment practices Human resources (Jarlath Brine)	• Two Ticks accreditation & annual audits; facilitate reasonable adjustments for job applicants declaring a disability. • Stonewall Diversity Champion. • Diversity awareness workshops &EqIAs for CEB reports. • Contribution of equalities analysis for annual and small grants application process analysis recommendations. • Lead on Youth Careers Fest for the Council and other support	• Constructive feedback to unsuccessful applicants could be better targeted. • Genuinely interactive and easy to access recruitment webpages with simple but impactful guidance, e.g. this is what a great application looks like. • Flexible/ progressive recruitment, e.g. accepting CVs, more widespread use of assessment centres/ stakeholder

Work & Lead Service (Officer)	Description	Identified gaps / opportunities (*Previous Scrutiny recommendations in italics*) (Call for evidence responses are shaded)
	for Job Fairs, e.g. assisted Crisis with an employment event. • Supported Community Association volunteers with HR advice. • Champion a diverse workforce and lead on the Equalities Action Plan (contained within the Annual Workplace Equalities Report). • Co-ordinate work experience & undergraduate placements across services with a focus on students living/ studying in Oxford. • Promote equality, diversity & inclusion internally for staff through training support around the behavioural framework, career development/ interview coaching, and a suite of personal development workshops. • Support employee volunteering.	panels/ team involvement rather than the historic one interview approach before appointment. • Targeted at BME and other underrepresented groups, an annual managed calendar of generic mock interview/ CV writing/ job application advice workshops & drop in surgeries linked with other Council services. • Consider health impact assessments.
Digital Inclusion Policy and Partnerships Team (Val Johnson)	• Roll out of wifi in public places. • A project with the Internet Institute to enable access for young people in secondary Schools to the internet.	• Consider extending free broadband to all City Council tenants (in receipt of full benefits). • Improve City Council website to make it more intuitive.
ESOL Policy and Partnerships Team (Val Johnson)	• Externally funded programme of activities including; the development of specialist ESOL Classes, classes for those volunteering to teach/support do ESOL classes, and classes aimed at women and children.	• An evaluation report is currently in draft form. This will propose the way forward to improve the coordination and access to ESOL classes and support for ESOL.
Culture Culture Team (Ceri Gorton)	• Free cultural activities and events • Free Heritage offer at the Museum • Dancin' Oxford produces a range of high quality free outdoor professional dance performances in public spaces annually. Stagecoach Oxford has given the festival free bus tickets for the Barton / BBL bus routes to enable residents to access the city centre events free of charge. • Free Baby Boogie events at Leys Family Centre, Roundabout (Barton), Northway and Donnington Doorstep. • 18 free dance workshop events in Barton, Donnington and BBL (led by professional artists from visting national dance companies to Oxford). • Oxford City Council's Dance Development Programme includes a heavily subsidised programme entitled "Dance for	• *Add an objective to extend cultural opportunities to excluded communities (agreed in part).*

Work & Lead Service (Officer)	Description	Identified gaps / opportunities (*Previous Scrutiny recommendations in italics*) (Call for evidence responses are shaded)
	Parkinson's"- run in partnership with English National Ballet.The programme also includes 3 theatre trips per year to London to see an ENB performance – this is heavily subsidised to make it affordable and accessible.	
Maximising household income		
Council Tax Reduction scheme	• Retention of a Council Tax Reduction scheme for residents on a low income.	
Oxford Living Wage Human resources (Simon Howick)	• Negotiate and implement the Oxford Living Wage for all Council Employees & as an exemplar for other local employers to follow.	• Improve promotion of Living Wage Week. • Look to develop an Oxford Living Wage brand/model, similar to Fair Trade or Organic. • *Survey all suppliers to measure compliance with paying the Oxford Living Wage (agreed).* • *Actively explores the merits of incentivising businesses to pay the Oxford Living Wage through offering businessrate discounts (agreed).* • *Seek to be more pro-active in engaging with employers and encouraging them to pay the Oxford Living Wage. This could also involve raising the profile of the Oxford Living Wage on the City Council website and listing employers that have committed to paying it (agreed).* • Commit to a regional Living Wage.
Welfare team response to government **welfare changes** Customer Services (Helen Bishop, Paul Wilding)	• Support to people affected by the impacts of welfare reforms, people in receipt of Discretionary Housing Payments and those in rent arrears. Many of these interventions are transformative and focused on changing lives rather than just income streams. In some instances interventions last for over 12 months. The team has successfully moved around one third of the people they work with into sustainable jobs. These include people with multiple complex needs, those who face tough barriers such as the long term unemployed, and people wouldn't be expected to find a job in a government scheme such as parents with over four children who are affected by the bedroom tax. Restore have trained staff to recognise mental health issues.	• Continue to develop a strong partnership approach so that interventions can be deeper and wider. • Transformational interventions that change lives not just income streams are prioritised wherever possible.

Work & Lead Service (Officer)	Description	Identified gaps / opportunities (*Previous Scrutiny recommendations in italics*) (Call for evidence responses are shaded)
Financial Inclusion Customer Services (Helen Bishop, Paul Wilding)	• Financial Inclusion Strategy. This has been described as the process which ensures a person's incoming money is maximised, their out-goings are controlled and they can exercise informed choices through access to basic financial services. The strategy sets out current and future actions divided into four categories: debt, income, housing, and skills, with both short and long term outcomes.	• Ensure Financial Inclusion work is prioritised and funded over the medium term. • Support Credit Unions to have a wider and more effective reach. • Ensure that address checks are carried out to ensure that wherever possible, cases do not need to be passed to bailiffs. • Lobby for more progressive Council Tax.
Advice services for residents facing social and financial problems Customer Services (Helen Bishop, Paul Wilding)	• Grants provided to advice agencies for 3 years. • One-off isolation funding to the Citizens Advice Bureau in 2014/15 generated over £1m of additional income for clients.	• Some advice agencies appear to be operating beyond their capacity. • Strengthen advice offering for Older People, better promotion of Attendance Allowance and Pension Credit. • CAB do not routinely record all 'secondary issues'. • The withdrawal of legal aid in particular for family law, debt, housing, employment, and welfare benefits. Increase support for advice centres. • Certain areas of the city have no local provision. • Increase provision of interpretation/translation services at advice centres.
Social inclusion / support to vulnerable groups		
Social Inclusion Communities and Neighbourhoods Service (Luke Nipen)	• The Social Inclusion Fund (£60k) supports community projects that help people of all ages feel more included in their community, builds their skills and increases their sense of achievement.	• *Reinstate£60k of funding beyond April 2015.* • Rethink punitive policies towards those who live on the city's waterways.

Grants to **voluntary bodies**
 	
Community and Neighbourhood Services (Angela Cristofioli/ Julia Tomkins)
	• Community Grants are aimed at projects that do one or more of the following (£95k awarded in 2013-14):
	  ○ Promote community activities and cohesion
	  ○ Get more people involved with the arts
	  ○ Tackle anti-social behaviour and improves community safety
	  ○ Promote and protects the natural environment and biodiversity
	  ○ Tackle social inequality
		• Provide longer term funding to Asylum Welcome.
		• *Work with OCVA to improve outreach and engagement activities with diverse community and voluntary groups, with a focus on building capacities and supporting bid-writing.*
		• *Provide a greater separation between grants allocated to smaller, localised community groups and those that seek to achieve wider community benefits (agreed in part).*

Work & Lead Service (Officer)	**Description**	**Identified gaps / opportunities** (*Previous Scrutiny recommendations in italics*) (Call for evidence responses are shaded)
The work of **neighbourhoods team** Communities and Neighbourhoods Service (Angela Cristofoli)	• Community development. Engaging with diverse groups including BME and older people to help them to develop their priorities and engage in their geographical community. This involves trying to overcome negative perceptions of the City Council, which are poor in some cases. 18 month project funding provided to CAB to provide capacity for home visits to reduce unclaimed benefits. • Activities for older people aimed at reducing isolation e.g. Go Active programme. • Working with health partners in regeneration areas.	• Increased presence of City Council services at Community Group meetings. • Promote the City Council as an employer by advertising in community papers. • *A high level review to flag up any issues of non-compliance with the Equalities Act.* • Much more public engagement. • Restore area parliaments.
Community centres in priority neighbourhoods Communities and Neighbourhoods Service (Mark Spriggs)	• There are 19 operational community centres in Oxford, many of which are owned by Oxford City Council. The centres are managed by Community Associations made up of local workers and volunteers. • Delivery of new Rose Hill Community Centre • Reduced fees for tutors using Blackbird Leys Community Centre	• Consider better utilisation of Community Centres to support the City Council's objectives. • Extend discounts for tutors to more community centres.
Leisure Leisure, Parks & Communities (Lucy Cherry)	• Active women campaign • Free swimming for under 17s	• Fund marking of football pitch at Peat Moors. • Work with bus companies to improve access to the new BBL pool from Hollow Way. • Keep Temple Cowley Pools open. • Try to work more closely with the Pakistani community to encourage them into sport and community participation. • Maintain provision of youth services, libraries, pools and sports centres.
Neighbourhood Management Corporate Team	• Pilot focusing on 3 areas: Rose Hill, The Leys and Barton. Working with local members and community organisations to develop action plans to address local needs, grow community capacity and improve public services.	
Work on reducing **Food Poverty** Policy and Partnerships Team (Val Johnson)	• Food Poverty Conference with Housing Associations planned for May/June 2014	• Take the lead role in facilitating the network of emergency food aid providers. Network meetings would enable providers to work more effectively and share resources and best practice. • Capacity building – explore how the City Council could

Work & Lead Service (Officer)	Description	Identified gaps / opportunities (*Previous Scrutiny recommendations in italics*) (Call for evidence responses are shaded)
		apply its experiences of capacity building in other sectors to build partnerships and remove admin from voluntary organisations providing emergency food aid. • Better signposting to emergency food aid providers. • Explore other models of addressing the issues raised by food banks, for example the community shop model, and how this works in the UK and other European countries. • The Council should have a food policy to address the needs of the poorest households, helping to sustain local food capacity near to where they live. • Activities to change attitudes towards surplus food.
Safeguarding Children and Vulnerable Adults Policy and Partnerships Team (Val Johnson)	• To ensure effective policies and procedures are in place to safeguard children and vulnerable adults. • To promote the wellbeing of children and young people and vulnerable adults. • Safeguarding Section 11 Self- assessment and Action Plan.	*Scrutiny Committee to review in April 2015.*
Partnerships supporting vulnerable groups and action plans Policy and Partnerships Team (Val Johnson)	• Ageing Successfully Partnership • Stronger Communities Group • Vulnerable Adult Action Plan in process of development. • Breaking the Cycle Plan on going review of activities in place, including health inequalities, children and young people, training and employment and community engagement. • City Council Health and Housing Working Together Action Plan in place and reviewed 6 monthly. • City Council Mental Health and Wellbeing Action Plan • City Council Children and Young People Plan • Improving GPs' understanding of the City Council's role	• No overriding strategy for inequality. • Link with OCCG review of Health Inequalities in Oxford. • Single point of access in the form of an assessment of needs website • There are very few day centres for chronically mentally ill people. • Exercise more influence over the NHS, OCCG etc. • Encourage better disabled access to shops/restaurants.

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Scrutiny work programme preparation 2015/16

Carry forward items

These are items for the Scrutiny Committee to carryforward:

Items carried forward	Suggested approach	Suggested / possible timing
Budget Review	Finance Panel Review	Dec 15-Feb 16
Neighbourhood working / community engagement / community development and capacity building	Review Group	
Local Economy Panel	Review Group	
Thames Water investment	Ad hoc Panel	16 July
Oxfutures	Member briefing	TBC
Proposed Lease and Monitoring Arrangements for Community Centres	Scrutiny Committee (pre-scrutiny)	7 September
Oxford Railway Station Redevelopment	Scrutiny Committee (pre-scrutiny)	7 September
Leisure and Wellbeing Strategy	Scrutiny Committee (pre-scrutiny)	7 September
Taxi Licencing	Scrutiny Committee	2 November
Discretionary Housing Payments	Scrutiny Committee	Mid-year
Performance Monitoring (corporate)	Scrutiny Committee	Quarterly
Budget monitoring	Finance Panel	Quarterly
Municipal Bonds / Local financing	Finance Panel	2 July
Corporate Debt Policy	Finance Panel (pre-scrutiny)	2 July
Performance Monitoring (housing)	Housing Panel	Quarterly
Housing Development delivery models	Housing Panel (pre-scrutiny)	9 December
Energy Strategy	Housing Panel (pre-scrutiny)	3 September
Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMO) Licensing Scheme	Housing Panel (pre-scrutiny)	8 October
De-designation of 40+ accommodation	Housing Panel	3 September
Review of the Homelessness Action Plan 2013-18	Housing Panel	3 September

New suggestions

These are new suggestions that have been made by Councillors. When selecting and prioritising items for the scrutiny work programme, members are asked to apply 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?*

The Scrutiny Officer has provided some suggested scores against these items but members may wish to review and re-prioritise these.

2 = Yes / High
1 = Moderate / Some constraints
0 = None / Little

** = High spend by other authorities.*

Suggested additions to the Scrutiny work programme	Suggested approach	Significant interest?	High OCC spend?	Essential service / priority?	Able to influence?	Total Score 0-8
Economic Development	Review Group / Considered by Local Economy Panel	2	2	2	1	**7**
Educational Attainment	Review Group / Considered by Inequality Panel	2	1*	1	1	**5**
Cycling	Review Group / Scrutiny Committee	2	1*	1	1	**6**
Tree cover, biodiversity and the work of the Forest of Oxford / project to get even more trees planted in the City	Review Group / Scrutiny Committee	2	1	1	1	**5**
School/employer links and careers	Review Group / Scrutiny	2	1	1	1	**5**

advice	Committee					
Tackling loneliness among the elderly	Review Group / Scrutiny Committee	2	1	1	1	**5**
The Council's external contracts, funding raised and their impacts	Review Group / One-off panel	1	1	1	2	**5**
Better Partnership with the County Council	Review Group / One-offpanel	2	1	1	2	**6**
Mental health services	One-off panel / Member Challenge Panel	2	1*	1	1	**5**
Oxford Transport Strategy	One-off panel / Considered by Cycling Panel	2	1*	1	1	**5**
New community centre for Jericho	One-off panel	1	1	1	2	**5**
Guest House regulation	One-off panel / Scrutiny Committee	2	0	1	1	**5**
Liberty's advice on the City Centre Public Spaces Protection Order and the City Council's response	One-off panel	2	2	2	2	**8**
Heritage listing process / Heritage & Conservation / impact of the Design Review Panel	Scrutiny Committee / One-off panel	1	1	1	2	**5**
The use of S106 funds and what influence Councillors have	Scrutiny Committee / Considered by Cycling Panel	1	2	1	1	**5**
How to ensure that the County Council improves the maintenance of roads and pavements / Monitoring the quality of sub-contractors works.	Scrutiny Committee	2	1*	1	1	**5**
Public Communications / Consultation	Scrutiny Committee	1	2	2	2	**7**
Graffiti	Scrutiny Committee	2	1	2	2	**7**
Youth Ambition	Scrutiny Committee	2	2	2	2	**8**
Whether the Council would benefit from having a Personnel Committee to deal	Scrutiny Committee / One-off panel	1	1	1	2	**5**

with employment, training and HR matters for staff						
Complaints received by the City Council	Scrutiny Committee	2	1	2	2	**7**
Equalities	Scrutiny Committee	2	1	2	2	**7**
Employment of interns, apprentices and work experience students	Scrutiny Committee	1	2	1	2	**6**
Contact Centre performance	Scrutiny Committee	1	2	2	2	**7**
Planning enforcement and monitoring compliance	Scrutiny Committee	1	2	2	2	**7**
Sustainability of the Council's Housing Stock	Housing Panel	2	2	2	1	**7**
Designating areas for high density housing development	Housing Panel	1	2	2	2	**7**
Review communications with people about their benefits, in particular the clarity and appropriateness of language used.	Housing Panel / One-off panel	1	1	2	2	**6**
Research trends of private sector housing costs. What are recent rent increases, changes to tenant fees, changes to landlord fees?	Housing Panel	2	1	2	1	**6**
Providing more housing on the waterways	Housing Panel	1	1	1	1	**4**
Use of CPO and EDMO powers for new affordable housing	Housing Panel / Considered by Inequality Panel	1	1	2	2	**6**
The option of using/encouraging community land trusts to provide affordable housing and to protect social housing from private sale.	Housing Panel / Considered by Inequality Panel	1	1	2	1	**5**
Consider options for using self-build to provide affordable housing.	Housing Panel / Considered by Inequality Panel	1	1	2	1	**5**
Child Poverty	Considered by Inequality	2	1*	1	1	**5**

	Panel					
How to improve the health of people in the city	Considered by Inequality Panel	2	1*	1	1	**5**
Primary care in Oxford	Considered by Oxfordshire County Council's Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee	2	0*	1	1	**4**

Draft Scrutiny Committee Agenda Schedule

Date and room	Agenda Item	Lead Member / Officer(s)
7 September 2015, 6.15pm, St. Aldate's Room	1. Leisure and Wellbeing Strategy (pre-scrutiny)	Ian Brooke
	2. Statement of Community Involvement 2015 (pre-scrutiny)	Lyndsey Beveridge
	3. Oxford Railway Station Redevelopment (pre-scrutiny)	Fiona Piercy
	4. Integrated report quarter 1 2015/15 (pre-scrutiny)	N/A
	5. Report of the Cycling Scrutiny Panel	Cllr Louise Upton

2015/16 Scrutiny Committee dates: 7 September, 6 October, 2 November, 8 December, 12 January, 2 February, 7 March, 5 April

Draft Finance Panel agenda schedule

Date and room	Agenda Item	Lead Officer(s)
2 July 2015, 5.30pm, St. Aldate's Room	1. Low Carbon Hub funding model	Steve Drummond (Low Carbon Hub),
	2. Municipal Bonds	Christian Wall,Local Capital Finance Company
	3. Corporate Debt Policy (pre-scrutiny)	Nigel Kennedy
	4. Integrated report 2014/15 quarter 4 (pre-scrutiny)	Nigel Kennedy

Provisional 2015/16 Finance Panel dates: 3 November, 14 January, 28 January & 7 April.

Draft Housing Panel Agenda Schedules

Date, room and time	Possible Agenda Items	Lead Officer(s)
3 September, 5pm, Room TBC	1. De-designation of 40+ accommodation 2. Review of the Homelessness Action Plan 2013-18 3. Energy Strategy (pre-scrutiny)	Tom Porter Dave Scholes Debbie Haynes

Provisional 2015/16 Housing Panel dates: 8 October, 9 December &9 March.

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Scrutiny Recommendation Tracker 2015-16

Report of the Local Economy Panel				
Recommendations	**Agreed Y/N**	**Executive response**	**Lead Member & Officer**	**Implemented Y/N / update due date**
1. We recommend that the City Council: a) Ensures that information about appealing to the Valuation Office Agency is made available to local businesses. In particular, this information should be communicated to all independent traders who may be affected by the major redevelopments taking place in Oxford. b) Takes any opportunities to join with other local authorities to lobby the new Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government for more council controls over business rates.	yes	There is no doubt that business rate reform and/or local capacity to benefit from business rate growth on a more generous basis are major issues for local government. The devolution agenda will also have a bearing on these issues.	Matt Peachey	Nov 2015
2. We recommend that the City Council works with the County Council through the Town Team to agree on a single united channel of regular communications to businesses, such as about travel disruptions, supported by a single online source of information.	yes		City Centre Manager	Nov 2015
3. We recommend that the City Council develops a more corporate approach to communicating with businesses, including guidance for all departments whose work has an impact or involvement with businesses. This could take the form of defining a central point of contact within the City Council, which can	no	The Communications team will examine this recommendation and consider what elements of it will be feasible and useful to take forward	Head of Comms	N/A

identify the appropriate unit to respond on specific issues, including the County Council as appropriate.				
4. We recommend that the City Council works with partners through the Town Team to reinforce the coordinated overall marketing and publicity campaign for Oxford in ways that cover all major potential audiences.	yes	The Town Team should also work closely with the Chief exec of Experience Oxfordshire on marketing and publicity for the city	City Centre Manager	Nov 2015
5. We recommend that the City Council develops a one stop shop function for events. This exercise should include a review of the costs and processes associated with aspects such as permission for road closures, stall licences and permits for distributing leaflets.	possibl y	The Events Team already provides a pretty comprehensive one stop shop function within the City Council but they have to work alongside County Council officers on highways issues, which inevitably results in a less than fully comprehensive service. Worth exploring the scope for greater integration	Peter McQuitty/Alis on Drummond	Nov 2015
6. We recommend that the City Council produces a simple analysis of the costs and benefits of pop up shops to landlords and the City Council.	no	The costs and benefits will vary so widely that this is likely to be a nugatory exercise.		N/A
7. We recommend that the City Council takes a lead in establishing and facilitating a city centre commercial property landlord forum. This would be intended to bring together the owners of commercial properties, including the City Council, to ensure that there is a coordinated approach towards issues affecting the city centre, such as the minimisation of the time during which premises are empty. The forum could be chaired by the Leader of the Council,	yes	This is a worthwhile initiative and worth trying, although there is an obvious danger that it would simply replicate the Town Team's work. The TOR would have to be very carefully written.	Jane Winfield	Nov 2015

linked to the work of the Town Team and constituted based on the model of the previous Pensions and Language School forums. We also suggest that its membership should include a representative of each political group and that City Councillors should be able to observe meetings of the forum.				
8. We recommend that the City Council leads on the development of a long term strategy for the city centre as a whole. This should include a commitment to developing and supporting vibrant and distinct city quarters away from prime sites, in locations such as Gloucester Green, Jericho/Observatory Quarter, Market Street, Broad Street and a possible arts quarter around the Ashmolean Museum.	yes	Work is already under way in the Planning Policy team on a city centre strategy.	Rachel Williams	Nov 2015
9. We recommend that dedicated officer time is allocated to the development and delivery of this city centre strategy. This could be funded wholly or in part via a BID and by additional business rates income that the role will generate, via reduced voids in commercial properties.	premature	When we have an agreed strategy, the resource implications will be assessed. The Town Team will be continuing their consideration of a BID over the next few months. The initiative lies with the business community		Nov 2015
10. We recommend that the City Council's next Asset Strategy (2016-2020) builds upon the aim (not always presently achieved) of utilising City Council assets in ways that can provide wider strategic benefits to the city centre. The Asset Strategy could provide clear guidelines on the use of City Council-owned commercial premises to ensure the diversity and vitality of the city's wider retail offer.	no	This recommendation will be remitted to the Asset management team for consideration with the portfolio holder and key officers when work on the 2016-20 strategy is started.	David Edwards/Jane Winfield	N/A

Covered Market Leasing Strategy – Scrutiny Committee 2 June				
Recommendation	**Agreed Y/N**	**Executive response**	**Lead Member & Officer**	**Implemented Y/N / due date**
We recommend that the City Executive Board approve the updated Covered Market Leasing Strategy 2015 with the following amendments: a) The word 'discouraged' in paragraph 4.4 is strengthened to 'avoided'. b) The word 'typically' in the sixth bullet point of paragraph 4.9 is changed to 'usually'. It could also be stated that exceptions will be considered for larger independent retailers that originate from Oxford.	Y	Happy to accept these changes	Bob Price / Elaine Philip	Y

City Centre Public Spaces Protection Order (PSPO) – Scrutiny Committee 2 June				
Recommendation	**Agreed Y/N**	**Executive response**	**Lead Member & Officer**	**Implemented Y/N / due date**
1. We recommend that an Enforcement Code of Conduct for Officers should be produced and that this code should be in place and in the public domain before any enforcement actions are taken under the City Centre Public Spaces Protection Order.		*Decision deferred.*	Dee Sinclair / Richard Adams	*TBC*
2. We ask Executive to note that a minority of the Scrutiny Committee opposed aspects of the PSPO most notably the inclusion of non-aggressive begging and busking in the PSPO.			Dee Sinclair / Richard Adams	
3. We recommend that the existing 'Code of Conduct for Busking and Street Entertaining in Oxford' should be reviewed and revised to provide a more comprehensive "Guide to Busking and Street Entertaining in Oxford". This guide should be accessible to buskers, street entertainers, businesses and the public, and draw on examples			Dee Sinclair / Richard Adams	

of good practice from other cities, as well as input Dee Sinclair / Richard Adams from stakeholders such as the Musicians Union. It should be in place before any enforcement actions are taken under the PSPO.				
4. We recommend that officers are instructed to look at the differential equalities impact of the PSPO proposals, for example the behaviour of sleeping in public toilets, having regard for example to safeguarding concerns for vulnerable adults.			Dee Sinclair / Richard Adams	
Housing Asset Management Strategy – Housing Panel 4 June				
Recommendation	**Agreed Y/N**	**Executive response**	**Lead Member & Officer**	**Implemented Y/N / due date**
1. We note that a number City Council owned garages are not in use and recommend that the City Council reviews how it could make better use of these assets (for example as sites for new affordable housing or free off street car parking for residents), treating several garage sites as a virtual site. Consideration should be given to explicitly stating this aim, currently implied, in the Asset Management Strategy.	In part	Garages are not housing assets so won't be mentioned in this strategy but we will be make better use of our garage assets.	Scott Seamons / Stephen Clarke	
Review of the HMO Licensing Scheme – Housing Panel 4 June				
Recommendation	**Agreed Y/N**	**Executive response**	**Lead Member & Officer**	**Implemented Y/N / due date**
1. We recommend that the City Council renews the HMO licensing scheme in its entirety for a further 5 years (option 3). Consideration should be given to appropriate incentives and disincentives for landlords, and to the balance between taking a more pro-active approach to compliance whilst continuing efforts to extend the licensing scheme to cover more HMOs.	Y		Scott Seamons / Ian Wright	Y

2. We note that the City Council is developing a Corporate Enforcement Policy and recommend that: a) Enforcement within the Private Rented Sector is a corporate priority, b) The Policy recognises that the City Council should take a different approach to enforcement in different sectors (e.g. Private Rented Sector, Public Spaces Protection Orders, etc.), rather than a one size fits all approach.	Y		Alex Hollingsworth / Cathy Gallagher	Nov 2015

MINUTES OF THE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Tuesday 2 June 2015

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OXFORD CITY COUNCIL

COUNCILLORS PRESENT: Councillors Simmons (Chair), Hayes (Vice-Chair), Coulter, Fry, Hollick, Henwood, Lloyd-Shogbesan, Smith, Taylor, Upton and Fooks.

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT: Councillor Dee Sinclair

INVITEES AND OTHER MEMBERS PRESENT: Councillor Elise Benjamin, Councillor Ruthi Brandt and Councillor David Thomas

OFFICERS PRESENT: Richard J Adams (Community Services), Jeremy Franklin (Law and Governance), Elaine Philip (Markets Manager), Andrew Brown (Scrutiny Officer) and Catherine Phythian (Committee Services Officer)

1. ELECTION OF CHAIR FOR THE COUNCIL YEAR 2015/16

The Scrutiny Committee elected Councillor Simmons to be the Chair for the Council Year 2015/16.

2. ELECTION OF VICE-CHAIR FOR THE COUNCIL YEAR 2015/16

The Scrutiny Committee elected Councillor Hayes to be the Vice - Chair for the Council Year 2015/16.

3. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr Altaf-Khan (substitute Cllr Fooks) and Cllr Darke.

4. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

5. UPDATES SINCE THE LAST MEETING

The Chair welcomed Cllr Taylor as a member of the Scrutiny Committee and thanked Cllr Anwar for her contribution to the work of scrutiny.

The Committee paid tribute to the valuable contribution that the late Cllr Val Smith had made to the work of the Scrutiny Committee and the Scrutiny Housing Panel.

Cllr Van Coulter reported that the Inequalities Scrutiny Panel had concluded its work and would present its report to the Scrutiny Committee meeting on 30 June 2015, for onward submission to the City Executive Board on 9 July 2015.

The Committee noted the dates for the next Standing Panel meetings.

6. SCRUTINY OPERATING PRINCIPLES AND PREPARATION FOR THE 2015/16 WORK PROGRAMME

The Scrutiny Officer presented the report.

Scrutiny Operating Principles 2015/16
In discussion the Committee agreed the following points:

- The Finance and Housing Standing Panels should continue in 2015/16;
- Membership of the Housing Panel should be increased to 6 councillors;
- Chairs of the Standing Panels would be elected at the first meeting of that Standing Panel;
- The timing of the Finance Panel meetings should be flexible so that if possible it could report back to the Scrutiny Committee on the budget proposals.

The Committee resolved to APPROVE the scrutiny operating principles for 2015/16 as listed in the report.

The Committee resolved to APPROVE that the following councillors should serve as members of the Finance and Housing Standing Panels in 2015/16:

- **Finance Standing Panel**: Cllrs Simmons, Hayes, Fry and Fooks.
- **Housing Standing Panel**: Cllrs Benjamin, Henwood, Hollick, Sanders, Smith and Wade.

2015/16 Work Programme
The Chair said that the 2015/16 Work Programme would be discussed and determined at the meeting on 30 June 2015. Members were asked to submit any further topics to the Scrutiny Officer by 12 June 2015. The Scrutiny Officer reminded the Committee that, if appropriate, some items on the work programme could be the subject of a member briefing session rather than a scrutiny review.

7. REPORT OF THE LOCAL ECONOMY SCRUTINY PANEL

Cllr Fry presented the report and recommendations of the Local Economy Panel which had been formed to examine the situation of small and medium enterprises in and near the city centre during a time of major developments which will affect the trading environment while construction occurs. The Panel

considered how the City Council could make the city centre even more attractive to the public and to local businesses.

In discussion the following points were made:

- That there was a case for the Local Economy Panel to continue looking at this, and related issues, in other parts of the city in 2015/16;
- That consideration of the business case for a BID inn Oxford City Centre should be added to the work programme and that this should include looking at the scope for public involvement in that initiative;
- That there was a strong argument for returning to previous practice in having a dedicated point of contact / lead officer for businesses within the Council.

The Scrutiny Committee resolved to APPROVE that the Local Economy Panel Report on Support for Businesses in the City Centre should be submitted to the City Executive Board subject to the following amendment to Recommendation 7 (text in italics):

7. We recommend that the City Council takes a lead in establishing and facilitating a city centre commercial property landlord forum. This would be intended to bring together the owners of commercial properties, including the City Council, to ensure that there is a coordinated approach towards issues affecting the city centre, such as the minimisation of the time during which premises are empty. *The forum could be chaired by the Leader of the Council and linked to the work of the Town Team and constituted based on the model of the previous Pensions and Language School forums. We also suggest that its membership should include a representative of each political group and that City Councillors should be able to observe meetings of the forum.*

8. CITY CENTRE PUBLIC SPACES PROTECTION ORDER (PSPO)

Cllr Sinclair, Executive Board Member for Crime, Community Safety and Licensing and the Service Manager, Environmental Protection presented the report. She said that this was the second Public Spaces Protection Order (PSPO) in Oxford and that it was aimed at tackling long-standing problems of anti-social behaviour within the city centre. She said that it was the Council's intention to be fair and balanced in its enforcement of the PSPO.

The Committee heard the following addresses:

Cllr Thomas: urged the Council to reconsider its position on busking as he believed that the consultation responses suggested there was no enthusiasm for such a measure. He suggested that the problems associated with busking would be better managed through use of a Community Protection Notice. He said that the Code of Conduct for Busking and Street Entertaining needed revision and referred the Committee to examples of documents produced in York. Copies of the personal material circulated by Cllr Thomas at the meeting, but which do not form part of the Council report, are appended to these minutes.

Cllr Brandt: urged the Council to take a sensitive and collaborative approach with local organisations and communities to deal with anti-social behaviour issues rather than to introduce the PSPO.

Giles Payne of Crisis Skylight, Oxford - welcomed the Council's decision to revise its position on rough sleeping and asked that they reconsider their position on begging. He said that it would be difficult to differentiate between instances of rough sleeping and begging and questioned the practicality of imposing Fixed Penalty Notices.

The Committee asked a number of questions around: what powers PSPOs replace, alternative powers available to the City Council, the wording and interpretation of the PSPO, how evidence is gathered, the enforcement process, and how representative the results of the consultation were.

In discussion the following points were made:

Control of dogs and street drinking: The Committee noted that there was a legal requirement on the Council to replace the existing city wide public space restrictions on dog control and street drinking. The inclusion of these issues in the PSPO was a replacement of existing provisions.

Begging: The Committee considered a proposal that 'persistent begging' should be removed from the PSPO. A majority of members did not support this proposed change. The Committee also discussed whether 'persistent begging' should be changed to 'persistent and aggressive begging'. A majority of members did not support this proposed change.

Enforcement: The Committee expressed concerns that enforcement was potentially quite a subjective matter and asked what guidance or rules were given to officers. The Service Manager, Environmental Protection explained that the Council followed a 3 stage approach to enforcement:

1. Early intervention & discussion
2. Issue of a Fixed Penalty Notice
3. Prosecution

He said that the preferred approach was always to take early action and speak to the individuals about the problem. This was found to be the most effective approach when dealing with anti-social behaviour. He offered to provide the Committee with a report detailing the breakdown between early intervention and enforcement actions. He informed the Committee that a corporate enforcement policy was being developed and would go to the City Executive Board later in the year. This would in effect be a code of conduct for enforcing officers. The Committee suggested that guidance should be available to officers and be in the public domain before any enforcement action is taken.

Busking / Code of Conduct: The Committee considered a proposal to remove 'breaches of the Code of Conduct for Busking and Street Entertaining in Oxford' from the behaviours included in the PSPO. A majority of members did not support this proposed change. The Committee supported having a code of

conduct for buskers and the principle that buskers should busk for a maximum of 60 minutes in any one place, as this enables more people to have the opportunity to busk in prime locations. The Committee felt that the City Council's Code of Conduct for Busking and Street Entertaining in Oxford could be strengthened and should be reviewed in light of examples of policies in other cities such as Liverpool and York, as well as input from groups such as the Musicians Union.

Sleeping in toilets: The Committee noted concerns about 'Sleeping in toilets' as this is primarily a safeguarding issue. The Committee suggested that officers should look at whether including this behaviour in the city centre PSPO would have a differential impact on equalities, for example by affecting women more than men.

The Scrutiny Committee AGREED to make the following recommendations to the City Executive Board:

1. that an Enforcement Code of Conduct for Officers should be produced and that this code should be in place and in the public domain before any enforcement actions are taken under the City Centre Public Spaces Protection Order;

2. that the existing 'Code of Conduct for Busking and Street Entertaining in Oxford' should be reviewed and revised to provide a more comprehensive "Guide to Busking and Street Entertaining in Oxford". This guide should be accessible to buskers, street entertainers, businesses and the public, and draw on examples of good practice from other cities such as Liverpool and York, as well as input from stakeholders such as the Musicians Union;

3. that officers are instructed to look at the differential equalities impact of the proposal to include the behaviour of sleeping in public toilets within the City Centre Public Spaces Protection Order, having regard to safeguarding concerns for vulnerable adults.

9. COVERED MARKET LEASING STRATEGY

The Markets Manager presented the report which provided details of the updated leasing strategy for the covered market. She explained that the updated Leasing Strategy builds on the 2007 leasing strategy, by incorporating the conclusions and recommendations of the 2013 review of the covered market management and operations. The draft revised leasing strategy was shared in a meeting with covered market traders in February 2015 and circulated to all traders for consultation. No substantive responses or concerns were received by officers.

The review identified a range of improvements which were needed to raise the market's trading performance. This included the need for a change in the retail mix and improvements in the quality and range of traders.

In discussion the Scrutiny Committee made the following points:

- It was essential that the distinctive character of the market was maintained;
- Were there sufficient incentives to attract the right mix of traders;
- the wording at paragraph 3.13 should be reviewed for clarity.

The Scrutiny Committee AGREED to make the following recommendations to the City Executive Board:

1. That paragraph 4.4. should be amended to read "Uses which detract from the Market's special character will be ~~discouraged~~ ***avoided***, for example, electrical / white goods, mobile phones, travel agents, estate agents, nailbars and other 'high street' type operators."

2. That paragraph 4.9, bullet point 6 should be amended to read: "Independent with limited (~~typically~~ ***usually*** less than 10) other shops."

10. REPORT BACK ON RECOMMENDATIONS

The Scrutiny Officer presented the report back on recommendations. He said that he was chasing for updates and for the outstanding written responses from by the Executive. The Chair said that it was pleasing to note that the majority of scrutiny recommendations were accepted by the Executive.

The Committee NOTED the report.

11. MINUTES

The Committee resolved to APPROVE the minutes of the meeting held on 27 April 2015 as a true and accurate record subject to the following amendment:

- that Cllr Coulter be included in the list of those present.

12. DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS

The Committee NOTED that next meeting was scheduled for 30 June 2015, and that further meetings were scheduled on the following dates:

7 September 2015
6 October 2015
2 November 2015
8 December 2015
12 January 2016
2 February 2016
7 March 2016
5 April 2016

The Committee agreed that all future meetings would start at 6.15pm.

The meeting started at 6.30 pm and ended at 8.15 pm

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