

Agenda

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Scrutiny Committee

Date: **Tuesday 2 April 2019**

Time: **6.00 pm**

Place: **St Aldate's Room - Oxford Town Hall**

For any further information please contact:

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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 Andrew Gant

Vice Chair Councillor Dr Joe McManners

Councillor Mohammed Altaf-Khan

Councillor Lubna Arshad

Councillor Nadine Bely-Summers

Councillor Steven Curran

Councillor Dr Hosnieh Djafari-Marbini

Councillor Alex Donnelly

Councillor James Fry

Councillor Pat Kennedy

Councillor Mark Lygo

Councillor Craig Simmons

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

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AGENDA

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|---|--|----------|
| 1 | APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE | |
| 2 | DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST | |
| 3 | CHAIR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS | |
| 4 | MINUTES | 7 - 14 |
| | Recommendation: That the minutes of the meeting held on 05 March 2019 be APPROVED as a true and accurate record. | |
| 5 | WORK PLAN AND FORWARD PLAN | 15 - 24 |
| | The Scrutiny Committee operates within a work plan which is agreed at the start of the Council year. The Committee is asked to review and note its work plan for the remainder of the 2018/19 council year. The City Executive Board's Forward Plan of decision is included for reference. | |
| 6 | OXFORD LIVING WAGE REVIEW GROUP - 12 MONTH UPDATE | 25 - 74 |
| | To receive an update on progress made against the recommendations of the Oxford Living Wage Review Group in March 2018. | |
| 7 | AUDIT OF FUSION LIFESTYLE | 75 - 98 |
| | To consider an internal audit report about the performance of Fusion Lifestyle. The report includes a view about the integrity of the data reported by Fusion Lifestyle to the Council, a line of enquiry which followed a recommendation made by the Scrutiny Committee. | |
| 8 | REPORT BACK ON RECOMMENDATIONS | 99 - 104 |
| | The Scrutiny Committee's recommendations on and the City Executive Board's responses to the following are attached: | |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Approach to City Centre Public Space Protection Orders • Securing Social Value Through Procurement; and • Street Art & Graffiti. | |

9 DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS

Scrutiny Committee

- 15 May 2019
- 4 June 2019
- 2 July 2019
- 3 September 2019
- 1 October 2019

Standing Panels

- Housing Standing Panel: 8 April, 27 June, 3 October
- Finance Standing Panel: [*4 April - this meeting has been cancelled*], 01 July, 5 September
- Companies Panel: 17 April, 3 July

All meetings start at 6.00 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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Minutes of a meeting of the SCRUTINY COMMITTEE on Tuesday 5 March 2019

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Committee members:

| | |
|--|----------------------------|
| Councillor Gant (Chair) | Councillor Altaf-Khan |
| Councillor Arshad | Councillor Bely-Summers |
| Councillor Curran | Councillor Djafari-Marbini |
| Councillor Donnelly | Councillor Lygo |
| Councillor McManners (Vice-Chair) | Councillor Simmons |
| Councillor Corais (for Councillor Fry) | |

Officers:

Ian Wright, Head of Service Regulatory Services and Community Safety
Hagan Lewisman, Active Communities Manager
Richard Adams, Community Safety Service Manager
Maria Warner, Recycling Team Leader
Laura Boughan, Recycling Project Co-ordinator
Stefan Robinson, Scrutiny Officer
John Mitchell, Committee and Member Services Officer

Also present:

Councillor Susan Brown, Leader of the Council
Councillor Linda Smith, Deputy Leader
Councillor Tom Hayes, Board Member for Safer, Greener, Environment.
Mark Munday, Fusion Lifestyle Divisional Business Manager

Apologies:

Councillors Fry and Kennedy sent apologies.

95. Declarations of interest

None.

96. Chair's Announcements

The Chair noted that item 11, reports for approval, now included the basis of a possible response from the Committee to the Oxfordshire Plan 2050 Regulation 18 Consultation, which had not been specifically mentioned on the face of the agenda.

The Chair said he had agreed to Councillor Aziz's request to speak to item 8 (Approach to City Centre Public Spaces Protection Orders).

97. Minutes

The Chair drew the Committee's attention to a communication received from the Board Member for Safer, Greener Oxford, Councillor Tom Hayes. Councillor Hayes was of the opinion that the minutes did not reflect strongly enough the view, expressed by the Committee, that street art had value as a social good. After discussion the Committee confirmed that the draft minutes did accurately reflect the tenor of that part of the previous meeting and therefore resolved to APPROVE the minutes of the meeting held on 05 February 2019 as a true and accurate record.

98. Work Plan and Forward Plan

The Scrutiny Officer noted that a draft report from the Tourism Review Group would come to the the Committee on 15 May and that he was seeking further information from officers about the delayed Oxpens Redevelopment Update report to see if it would merit Scrutiny consideration.

The Committee agreed that items on Sustainability Strategy and Seacourt Park and Ride should be added to its Work Plan.

99. Recycling in Oxford

At the request of the Committee, Oxford Direct Services had been invited to give a presentation outlining their work and current recycling rates within the City. The Recycling Team Leader, Maria Warner and the Recycling Project Co-ordinator, Laura Boughan spoke to a presentation, a copy of which is attached to these minutes. Oxford was one of the best performing urban councils in respect of key recycling indicators. The work of the Oxford Direct Services Recycling Team was carefully targeted and differentiated in response to the detailed data held about recycling rates and demography in different parts of the City. While overall performance was very good there was of course room for improvement, ordinary household waste bins comprised 34% food waste for example. The Blue Bin Incentive Scheme continued to be effective and was now supported by Council funding, having originally been supported by government funding. The Department for the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) was currently undertaking an important consultation on "Consistency in Household & Business Recycling Collections in England" and the recycling team would be responding to it.

The Committee noted the desirability of ensuring sufficient opportunities to segregate waste discarded in the public domain; targeting recycling information at the transient community of English as a Foreign Language students; and considering ways of doing more to encourage greater levels of commercial recycling.

Overall however the Committee was delighted to hear of the City's good recycling performance, of the team's contribution to that and its evident commitment and enthusiasm to improving it still further. The Committee also confirmed its support for a continuation of the budget for the excellent work of the Recycling Team and Blue Bin League.

100. Update on the Corporate Plan

The Committee had before it a report on the updated Corporate Plan, destined for the City Executive Board on 13 March. The Leader of the Council, Councillor Susan Brown, introduced the report, reminding the Committee that this update was essentially a monitoring report, before work would begin on the plan for the period beyond 2020.

Cllr Simmons questioned whether the success measure “Implementation of measures to reduce the City Council’s carbon footprint by 5% each year” was expected to be met as claimed in the report, understanding, rather, that the latest figure was 4.3 %. The Leader said that the figures may refer to different reporting periods but that this would be checked for accuracy.

101. Approach to City Centre Public Spaces Protection Orders (PSPO)

The Committee had before it a report concerning a city centre consultation process to determine the standards of acceptable behaviour and the acceptability and appropriateness of a City Centre Public Spaces Protection Order (PSPO) for tackling particular behaviours, destined for the City Executive Board on 13 March 2019.

The Chair introduced the item by reminding the Committee that the previous City Centre PSPO had lapsed and this report provided the first step in consideration of the desirability of a new PSPO and the form such an Order might take.

The Board Member for Safer, Greener Oxford, Councillor Tom Hayes, said the report sought to introduce an additional layer of consultation prior to the introduction of a new PSPO. Before proceeding with a new PSPO it was important to establish a consensus about what the wider community see as acceptable behaviour and the appropriateness of a PSPO for tackling that which is unacceptable; this is what the proposed consultation sought to achieve. It was important to be very clear that the possible introduction of a new PSPO did not seek to criminalise rough sleeping. The Council’s wish to help and support those who are rough sleeping was unambiguous and all steps were taken to encourage rough sleepers to access the services available to them.

Councillor Aziz addressed the Committee, citing examples of homeless people having been victims of extremely anti-social behaviour by others. She argued that all steps should be taken to protect their interests and that consideration should be given to a rough sleepers’ protection policy.

In a wide ranging discussion the following points were raised by the Committee among others:

- An appraisal of people’s views, via the consultation, of acceptable behaviour was welcome but there was perhaps too much of a focus on a PSPO as a possible means of addressing unacceptable behaviour
- The data provided showed that recourse to the previous PSPO was very infrequent which begged a question about the need for a new one. On the other hand, that it was only necessary to have recourse to the PSPO on 6 occasions out of 1000 was evidence of it being a successful deterrent
- The period now underway without a PSPO in place provided a useful opportunity to see whether its absence was detrimental

- A new PSPO might however provide a useful tool for the Council to help keep the City safe for all members of the public, in relation to certain behaviours such as the discarding of drug paraphernalia.
- The existence of a PSPO did not sit comfortably alongside the Council's other multi-disciplinary approaches to supporting and helping those who are homeless or rough sleeping
- It was imperative that a consultation was truly inclusive, gathering the views all those with an interest in the matter
- It would be helpful to have a clearer idea of the police's role and views about prevention, deterrent and enforcement in this area.
- While it was clear that there was no intention to victimise those who were homeless or rough sleeping, the nature of many of the behaviours likely to be cited as unacceptable, meant that it might be an unintended consequence.
- The Anti-Social Behaviour Policy (referred to in the report's recommendations) might benefit from further amendments notwithstanding its review as part of the review of the process for issuing Community Protection Notices a year previously. The conclusion of the consultation process will determine whether the Committee wishes to revisit the Policy as part of its work plan.

Councillor Hayes and the Community Safety Service Manager confirmed that great care would be taken to ensure that the consultation was truly inclusive, meaningful and open ended. A PSPO was not the only means available to the Council to address unacceptable behaviour. The Council invested heavily in engaging with individuals focusing on improving their life chances and encouraging them to access support services rather than enforcement of sanctions. Councillors, other individuals and organisations would of course have the opportunity to respond to the consultation in due course. Councillor Hayes and officers would be talking with Councillor Aziz about her concerns and would be very happy to talk to others as necessary.

The Committee's overarching view was that while a consultation on the basis set out was welcome, there was a residual concern about the possible introduction, eventually, of a new PSPO. The Committee therefore resolved to pass recommendations of the following nature to the City Executive Board:

- 1) That the Council ensures that the consultation on acceptable behaviours in the City Centre actively seeks out the views of:**
 - a) Rough sleepers and related third sector support organisations, as well as other vulnerable groups and their associated bodies.**
 - b) Thames Valley Police.**
 - c) People who are likely to oppose the introduction of PSPOs.**
- 2) That the consultation on acceptable behaviours presents information objectively, and that questions are phrased in an open way, so as not to unduly influence the responses.**

- 3) **That any subsequent City Executive Board report concerning PSPOs discusses alternative approaches to managing unacceptable behaviours, and the benefits and limitations of such approaches.**
- 4) **That consideration is given to how the Council could better protect people sleeping rough from violence and abuse.**

The Committee indicated its wish to review the outcome of the consultation, when it is brought forward for City Executive Board consideration. The conclusion of this process will determine whether the Committee wishes to revisit the Council's Anti-social Behaviour Policy as part of its work plan.

102.Fusion Lifestyle

The Chair reminded the Committee that it had been intended to receive the detailed audit report of Fusion Lifestyle but, regrettably, it was not available in time for this meeting. The report would, however, be going to the Audit & Governance Committee the following week. In the meantime the Committee had before it the Q3 performance information for Fusion Lifestyle.

The Active Communities Manager, Hagan Lewisman , and Fusion Divisional Business Manager, Mark Munday spoke to these latest data which presented a "positive direction of travel". Council and Fusion Lifestyle staff were working hard to drive improvement. The challenges faced by the sector at a local and national level, as previously rehearsed, remained. New senior staff were in post at the Leys and Marston Ferry Leisure Centres. Customer engagement and internal auditing were improved and marketing was more focused. Customer satisfaction rates were above the national average and cleanliness levels had improved, though were recently as low as 68%. All five of the Council's leisure facilities remain accredited to the UK quality award scheme for sport and leisure, QUEST.

Given the volatility of some indicators, the Committee questioned the reliability of the latest data as at previous meetings. MM said the audit report was robust and would address the point. It was also acknowledged that the particularly poor performance in 2017 distorted the overall picture to some extent and recent improvements, while very welcome, were coming from a low base.

The poor performance in 2017 had elicited the response that there was a need to reconfigure services, was that need still there? MM cited examples of changes that had been made at a site level and which had contributed to the recent improvements.

In response to questions about the credit rating of Fusion Lifestyle the Committee was assured that the company's financial position was monitored regularly and closely.

The Committee was pleased to hear about the positive direction of travel but drew attention to a number of detailed concerns of which they were aware or had been reported to them: cleanliness at Marston Ferry and the Leys; older residents finding the pool temperature at the Leys too cool; the unavailability of sessions for mothers with toddlers at appropriate times; an absence of female lifeguards at some women only

swimming sessions; and the desirability of women only sessions being screened from public view. HL and MM agreed to consider these suggestions.

The Chair drew attention to an observation from Cllr Fry that a breakdown of year-on-year figures for participation by centre and activity would be useful, though it was noted that this level of detail may be difficult to provide.

The Committee looked forward to receiving the detailed audit report and service improvement plan at their next meeting.

103. Quarter 3 Council Performance Report

This report was before the Committee, principally for information. With the Committee's agreement the Chair said he would pass on a number of detailed observations made by Councillor Fry in advance of the meeting.

104. Report for approval

The Committee had before it a draft report and recommendations concerning Street Art and Graffiti, flowing from the meeting held on 5 February 2019. The Committee agreed that the report should be submitted to the City Executive Board on 13 March 2019.

The Committee also had before it the basis of a possible response from the Committee to the Oxfordshire Plan 2050 Regulation 18 Consultation. The Committee agreed that a response should be submitted on its behalf and that the Chair and Vice-Chair be mandated to make such further changes to it as necessary to reflect the strength of the Committee's views about the matter. It was agreed that the response should also make reference to the Government's Clear Growth Strategy, which required certain 'green' standards in development.

105. Report back on recommendations

At its meeting on 12 February 2019, the City Executive Board considered the Committee's recommendations in relation to the Rent Guarantee Scheme (RGS) and the 2019/20 budget. The Board's response to both sets of recommendations was before the Committee.

It was agreed that the City Executive Board's response to the RGS was unclear and that its response of "partially" to the recommendations of the Committee should in fact be "No" based on the comment provided. The Chair agreed to report this back to the City Executive Board.

106. Changes to Standing Panel Membership

It was agreed that the Chair should replace Councillor Landell-Mills on the Companies Panel for the remainder of the Council Year.

107.Dates of future meetings

Scrutiny Committee

- 02 April 2019
- 15 May 2019
- 4 June 2019
- 2 July 2019
- 3 September 2019
- 1 October 2019

Standing Panels

- Housing Standing Panel: 8 April, 27 June, 3 October
- Finance Standing Panel: 4 April, 01 July, 5 September
- Companies Panel: 17 April, 3 July

All meetings start at 6.00 pm

The meeting started at 6.00 pm and ended at 8.20 pm

Chair

Date: Tuesday 2 April 2019

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SCRUTINY WORK PLAN

April 2019 - July 2019

Published on: 25/03/19

The Scrutiny Committee agrees a work plan every year detailing selected issues that affect Oxford or its people. Time is allowed within this plan to consider topical issues as they arise throughout the year as well as decisions to be taken by the City Executive Board. This document represents the work of scrutiny for the 2018-19 council year and will be reviewed at each meeting of the Scrutiny Committee.

The work plan is based on suggestions received from all elected members and senior officers. Members of the public can also contribute topics for inclusion in the scrutiny work plan by completing and submitting our [suggestion form](#). See our [get involved webpage](#) for further details of how you can participate in the work of scrutiny.

The following criteria will be used by the Scrutiny Committee to evaluate and prioritise suggested topics:

- Is consideration of the issue timely?
- Is it a corporate priority?
- Is the issue of significant public interest?
- Can Scrutiny influence and add value?
- Is it an area of high expenditure, income or savings?

Some topics will be considered at Scrutiny Committee meetings and others will be delegated to standing panels. Items for more detailed review will be considered by time-limited review groups.

The Committee will review the Council's [Forward Plan](#) at each meeting and decide which executive decisions it wishes to comment on before the decision is made. The Council also has a "call in" process which allows decisions made by the City Executive Board to be reviewed by the Scrutiny Committee before they are implemented.

Scrutiny Committee and Standing Panel responsibility and membership

| Committee / Panel | Remit | Membership |
|--------------------|---|---|
| Scrutiny Committee | Overall management of the Council's scrutiny function. | Councillors; Andrew Gant (Chair), Mohammed Altaf-Khan, Lubna Arshad, Nadine Bely-Summers, Steve Curran, Hosnieh Djafari-Marbini, Alex Donnelly, James Fry, Pat Kennedy, Joe McManners (Vice Chair), Craig Simmons, Mark Lygo. |
| Finance Panel | Finance and budgetary issues and decisions | Councillors; James Fry (Chair), Mohammed Altaf-Khan, Tiago Corais, Chewe Munkonge, Craig Simmons, Roz Smith. |
| Housing Panel | Strategic housing and landlord issues and decisions | Councillors; Lubna Arshad, Nadine Bely-Summers (Chair), Richard Howlett, Mike Gotch, Elizabeth Wade, Dick Wolff and Geno Humphrey (tenant co-optee). |
| Companies Panel | To scrutinise shareholder decisions relating to wholly Council-owned companies. | Councillors; James Fry (Chair), Tiago Corais, Richard Howlett, Andrew Gant, Chewe Munkonge, Craig Simmons. |

Current and planned review groups

| Topic | Remit | Membership |
|----------------------------------|---|--|
| No Local Connection Review Group | To review the Council's Local Connection Policy in relation to homelessness, and how services could be improved for those without a local connection. | Councillors; Nadine Bely-Summers (Chair), Shaista Aziz, Paul Harris, Richard Howlett, Tom Landell-Mills, Craig Simmons |
| Budget Review 2019/20 | To review the 2019/20 budget proposals. | Finance Panel Membership |
| Tourism Management | To review how increasing tourism is being managed in the City, and new ways of improving the Oxford experience for both tourists and residents. | Councillors; Andrew Gant (Chair), James Fry, Pat Kennedy, Alex Donnelly, Paul Harris and Dick Wolff. |

Indicative timings of review groups

| | Feb | March | April | May | June | July | August | September |
|----------------------------|--------------------|-------|-------|-----------|---------------|---------------------------------------|--|---|
| No Local Connection | | | | | Update report | Decision on review groups for 2019/20 | Preparation for review group meetings in September 2019. | New Review Group starts its work, reporting in November / December. |
| Budget review | Reporting | | | | | | | |
| Tourism Management | Evidence Gathering | | | Reporting | | | | |

SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

2 APRIL 2019 - CONFIRMED REPORTS

| Agenda item | Decision | Description | CEB Portfolio | Report Contact |
|------------------------|----------|---|---|--|
| Oxford Living Wage | No | To consider how the Council is promoting the Oxford Living Wage to local employers and what more can be done. | Corporate Strategy and Economic Development | Matt Peachey, Economic Development Manager |
| Fusion Lifestyle Audit | No | To consider the outcome of the Audit of Fusion Lifestyle's data integrity and performance. | Deputy Leader (Statutory) - Leisure and Housing | Lucy Cherry, Leisure and Performance Manager |

15 MAY 2019 - PROVISIONAL REPORTS

| Agenda item | Decision | Description | CEB Portfolio | Report Contact |
|---|----------|--|--|---|
| Scrutiny Committee Operating Principles | No | To review and agree the Committee's Operating Principles for 2019/20 | Leader, Economic Development and Partnership | Stefan Robinson, Scrutiny Officer |
| Accessibility project update | No | To consider proposals for improving the accessibility of Town Hall facilities and meetings for users with disabilities. | Supporting Local Communities | David Hunt, Commercial Manager |
| Seacourt Park and ride Extension | Yes | To review a report which seeks CEB approval for the capital scheme before major works commence and to approve the appointment of a contractor. | Planning and Transport | Paul Walker, Interim Projects Director, Regeneration Team |

JUNE 2019 - PROVISIONAL REPORTS

| Agenda item | Decision | Description | CEB Portfolio | Report Contact |
|-------------------------------------|----------|---|------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Scrutiny Committee Annual Work Plan | No | To consider a longlist of Work Plan suggestions for prioritisation, and to appoint any standing | Leader, Economic | Stefan Robinson, Scrutiny Officer |

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|-------------------------------------|-----|---|---|--|
| 2019 | | panels for the year. | Development and Partnership | |
| No local connection review | No | To consider the report of the No Local Connection Review Group. | Deputy Leader (Statutory) - Leisure and Housing | Stefan Robinson, Scrutiny Officer |
| Safeguarding report and action plan | Yes | To consider the annual safeguarding report 2018/19 and safeguarding action plan for 2019/20 | Safer, Greener Environment | Rosie Woollcott, Safeguarding Co-ordinator |

2 JULY 2019 - PROVISIONAL REPORTS

| Agenda item | Decision | Description | CEB Portfolio | Report Contact |
|--|----------|--|--|--|
| Scrutiny Review Group Scoping and Selection | No | To select one or more review groups to undertake a detailed piece of scrutiny work in 2019/20. | Leader, Economic Development and Partnership | Stefan Robinson, Scrutiny Officer |
| Monitoring the Community Grants Programme - Report for 2018/19 | Yes | To inform members of the monitoring findings of the 2018/19 grants programme | Supporting Local Communities | Julia Tomkins, Grants & External Funding Officer |
| Go Ultra Low Pilot | No | To consider the outcome of the Go Ultra Low Pilot and any next steps. | Safer, Greener, Environment | Jo Colwell, Service Manager Environmental Sustainability |

FINANCE PANEL

4 APRIL 2019 - CANCELLED

1 JULY 2019

5 SEPTEMBER 2019

7 NOVEMBER 2019

HOUSING PANEL

8 APRIL 2019 - PROVISIONAL REPORTS

| Agenda item | Decision | Description | CEB Portfolio | Report Contact |
|---|----------|--|---|--|
| Project Approval and Delegated Authority for Spend for the development of a Homeless Shelter and Assessment Hub | Yes | To seek Project Approval for the development of a new homeless shelter and assessment hub at Floyds Row to further develop services focusing on the prevention and relief of rough sleeping, including a winter shelter. To delegate authority to enter into construction contracts accordingly. | Deputy Leader (Statutory) - Leisure and Housing | Nerys Parry, Housing Strategy & Needs Manager |
| Breaches in Building Regulations | No | To consider a report on enforcement action taken against breaches in building regulations. | Planning and Transport | Ian Wright, Head of Regulatory Services and Community Safety |

27 JUNE 2019

3 OCTOBER 2019

5 DECEMBER 2019

19

COMPANIES PANEL

The Companies Panel will meet prior to meetings of the Shareholder Groups. Provisional dates for the Companies Panel are outlined below:

17 APRIL 2019

3 JULY 2019

23 July 2019

17 OCTOBER 2019

14 NOVEMBER 2019

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FORWARD PLAN

April 2019 – December 2019

REPORTS TO CEB AND COUNCIL

CEB: 10 APRIL 2019

| | |
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| ITEM 13: ID: I021458 | IMPLEMENTATION OF AN ELECTRIC VEHICLE STRATEGY WITH ASSOCIATED INFRASTRUCTURE TO SUPPORT TARGETED IMPROVEMENT OF AIR QUALITY. Report Status: Confirmed for this meeting |
| <p>To present for approval the City Council's plans for Electric Vehicle charging and associated infrastructure to support the City Council and Oxford in its journey to Zero Emissions.</p> | |
| | |
| ITEM 14: ID: I021448 | PROJECT APPROVAL AND DELEGATED AUTHORITY FOR SPEND FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF A HOMELESS SHELTER AND ASSESSMENT HUB Report Status: Provisional: Awaiting further information, advice or input. |
| <p>To seek Project Approval for the development of a new homeless shelter and assessment hub at Floyds Row to further develop services focusing on the prevention and relief of rough sleeping, including a winter shelter. To delegate authority to enter into construction contracts accordingly.</p> | |
| ITEM 15: ID: I020922 | SUMMERTOWN AND ST. MARGARET'S NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN Report Status: Confirmed for this meeting |
| <p>The report to CEB will follow the decision of the Referendum, which is likely to take place in early March 2019. Assuming that there is a majority in favour of the Plan, this report will seek the adoption of the Summertown and St. Margaret's Neighbourhood Plan which will then go to Full Council for the decision to be ratified..</p> | |

COUNCIL 29 APRIL 2019

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| ITEM 16: ID: I021410 | CODE OF CONDUCT COMPLAINT HANDLING ARRANGEMENTS Report Status: Confirmed for this meeting |
| <p>To Approve the proposed changes to the "Complaint Handling Arrangements" documentation, as recommended by the Standards Committee.</p> | |

COUNCIL 13 MAY 2019 (ANNUAL MEETING)

CEB: 22 MAY 2019

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| ITEM 18: ID: I015275 | EAST OXFORD COMMUNITY CENTRE - IMPROVEMENT SCHEME Report Status: Provisional : Decision needs further consideration or information |
| To present an improvement scheme for the East Oxford Community Centre following public consultation. | |
| ITEM 19: ID: I021018 | SEACOURT PARK AND RIDE EXTENSION Report Status: Provisional: Decision needs further consideration or information |
| Seacourt P&R Extension | |
| Approval of main works contract, and associated capital expenditure | |
| ITEM 20: ID: I021261 | THE DELIVERY ARRANGEMENTS FOR ADDITIONAL AFFORDABLE HOUSING Report Status: Provisional: Decision reliant on another action or process |
| The recent changes to the HRA headroom limit gives the Council the opportunity to acquire and manage newly developed affordable housing. This report sets out how the Council's land assets can be used to enable this development to proceed with its housing company, Oxford City Homes Limited, whilst supporting overall service delivery within the Council and providing new homes for those in need. | |
| ITEM 21: ID: I021456 | COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE LEVY CHARGING SCHEDULE REVIEW Report Status: Confirmed for this meeting |
| This report aims to seek approval and for it;s recommendations post consultation and approval for submission to be examined with the Oxford Local Plan | |
| ITEM 22: ID: I021449 | APPROVAL TO DISPOSE OF HRA LAND FOR HOUSING Report Status: Provisional: Awaiting further information, advice or input. |
| To seek approval to dispose of land at less than market value for the provision of three units of affordable housing on an abandoned garage site. | |
| ITEM 23: ID: I021447 | PARK & RIDE MANAGEMENT Report Status: Provisional: Decision reliant on another action or process |
| The Park & Ride car parks to be operated by Oxford City Council. | |

CEB: 12 JUNE 2019

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| ITEM 24: ID: I019467 | OXPENS LANE REDEVELOPMENT UPDATE Report Status: Confirmed for this meeting |
| The report is an update position on the redevelopment of the Oxpens Lane key City Centre site; the required delivery structure to take the project forward and the procurement of a preferred development partner. The City Council has formed a joint venture company, OxWED, with Nuffield College to progress the delivery of this scheme | |

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| ITEM 25: ID: I020879 | WOLVERCOTE NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN Report Status: Provisional: Decision reliant on another action or process |
| Report to CEB to endorse the Examiner's modifications to the Wolvercote Neighbourhood Plan, following the Examination, and to move to a Referendum | |

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|---|--|
| ITEM 26: ID: I020875 | SAFEGUARDING REPORT AND ACTION PLAN Report Status: Confirmed for this meeting |
| Annual safeguarding report 2018/19 and safeguarding action plan for 2019/20 | |

CEB: 10 JULY 2019

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| ITEM 27: ID: I021150 | MONITORING THE COMMUNITY GRANTS PROGRAMME - REPORT FOR 2018/19 Report Status: Provisional: Decision reliant on another action or process |
| To inform members of the monitoring findings of the 2018/19 grants programme | |

COUNCIL: 22 JULY

CEB: 07 AUGUST 2019

CEB: 11 SEPTEMBER 2019

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| ITEM 28: ID: I021385 | JOINT MUNICIPAL WASTE PLAN Report Status: Confirmed for this meeting |
| This report seeks to agree the Oxfordshire-wide Joint Municipal Waste Strategy for collection authorities, e.g. Oxford City Council via Oxford Direct Services, and disposal authority Oxfordshire County Council. | |

COUNCIL: 07 OCTOBER

CEB: 09 OCTOBER 2019

CEB: 13 NOVEMBER 2019

COUNCIL: 25 NOVEMBER

CEB: 11 DECEMBER 2019

| | |
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| ITEM 29: ID: I020878 | ANNUAL MONITORING REPORT 2018/19 Report Status: Confirmed for this meeting |
| The AMR report is a statutory requirement providing information as to the extent to which the policies set out in the Local Plan are being achieved and the implementation of the Local Development Scheme. | |

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| ITEM 30: ID: I021433 | ENERGY & WATER SUPPLY PROCUREMENT 2020 – 2024 Report Status: Provisional: Decision needs further consideration or information |
| To seek approval for the approach to the procurement of the Council's energy and water for the period 1 October 2020 to 30 September 2024 | |

To: Scrutiny Committee
Date: 2 April 2019
Report of: Economic Development Manager
Title of Report: Update on the Living Wage Recommendations adopted by CEB

| Summary and recommendations | |
|---|--|
| Purpose of report: | To provide an officer update on the City Council's progress against the Living Wage Review Recommendations adopted by CEB in March 2018. |
| Key decision: | No |
| Executive Board Member: | Cllr Susan Brown – Economic Development Portfolio |
| Recommendations: That the Committee: | |
| 1. Notes the report and provide comment on the direction of travel | |

| Appendices | |
|------------|---|
| Appendix 1 | List of Living Wage Paying Organisations |
| Appendix 2 | Update against CEB recommendations |
| Appendix 3 | Good Food Oxford Research – A life on the Living Wage |

Introduction and background

1. The current idea of a 'living wage' originated in 2001 in east London – it was the product of discussions in civil society, among low paid workers, faith groups and social justice campaigners. Subsequently this idea was also carried forward by trade unions, political parties, student campaigners and businesses themselves. Today some 4,000 organisations accredited for paying staff and contractors either the National 'Real' Living Wage or London Living wage. This campaign created such a strong profile that in 2016 the then chancellor, George Osborne, somewhat controversially used the concept to promote a staged increases in the National Minimum Wage for those 25+ also branding it as the 'national living wage'.

2. Some 11 years ago Oxford City Council adopted the Oxford Living Wage. This came to be set at 95% of the London Living Wage. In 2017 the Scrutiny Committee decided to review the Council's work in this area and we set out to engage with key partners:

those groups in civil society who have done so much to promote the idea; and local businesses and of course we reviewed our own record in implementation.

3. In April 2018, following a successful Scrutiny review process, Oxford City Council adopted a total of 14 recommendations. These are relevant to all paid staff, and a range of service areas for delivery, most notably Finance, Procurement, Policy and Communications and Economic Development. Cllr Martyn Rush has taken on the role of Living Wage Champion, lead elected representative, promoting the Living Wage.

4. From April 2019, the Living Wage outside London will be £9.00 an hour. If an employee works a 37 hour week, this would mean a minimum annual pay of £17,316. From April 2019, the Oxford Living Wage will be £10.02 an hour. If an employee works a 37 hour week, this would mean a minimum annual pay of £19,278.

Current position on the Real Living Wage

5. In 2015, 11.1% of jobs in the city were estimated to pay below the Real Living Wage (ONS, 2015). The figure in 2018 is 10.3%, well below the 22.8% UK average the lowest in the UK where figures are available (ONS, 2018). There is much more to do of course. This statistic alone means little without understanding housing costs as a ratio to earnings; currently highest in the UK at 16:7 to 1. Average rental costs take one of the highest proportions of people's average monthly income too.

6. Over the last year, we have seen an increase in Oxford headquartered organisations accredited as Living Wage Employers - from 32 in March 2018 to 43 in March 2019. There are now 85 branches overall, up from 63 last year. See Appendix 1.

Progress against Adopted Scrutiny Recommendations

7. Of the 14 recommendations adopted by CEB in April 2018, all of them are being addressed in some way. See appendix 2. Below we highlight some of the key areas of progress and activity.

10. Living Wage Week (5-11 November); The Communications team produced 3 press releases and editorial opinion piece from Cllr Rush. Three additional press pieces were produced directly by the Oxford Mail. Interviews took place with BBC radio and TV South. A series of videos were filmed with Cllr Rush and posted during Living Wage Week. We also posted a video announcement of the new Oxford Living Wage rate. Facebook results were encouraging suggesting a reach of around 16,500 users. Officers are planning more activity in April and throughout the year

11. Officers commissioned a new logo for the Oxford Living Wage – this is now on our www.oxford.gov.uk/livingwage page together with the Living Wage Foundation logo. (see next steps).

12. Direct discussions have been held with numerous employers on the Living Wage, several engaging in further dialogue with the Living Wage Foundation. In Living Wage week, officers held a business event to start a conversation with employers on paying the Living Wage with around 40 in attendance. A lively debate took place on the issues and the inter-relationship between local government and suppliers, the productivity and staff benefits, and the challenges faced by business. Dialogue on the Living Wage

takes places through all Economic Development Team discussions with business as part of a wider agenda of topics.

13. In 2018, officers established an 'Oxford Inclusive Employer Task and Finish Group' under the Oxford Strategic Partnership banner. This is ongoing with numerous major employers on the group. Its focus is Living Wage, Inclusive Recruitment and Social Value as three areas of employer action. The membership is very broad, and the members have different areas of focus or priority. Not all are willing to entertain accreditation at this stage but are willing to look at the other two measures as part of an ongoing dialogue and journey.

14. Oxford City Council, in partnership with the Living Wage Foundation, is vying to become one of the first UK pilots in a new programme, Making Living Wage Places. The Making Living Wage Places programme seeks to recognise the places that are leading the way on the real Living Wage. It will formally recognise the towns, cities, boroughs and regions across the UK that show leadership, progress and ambition on the uptake of the real Living Wage. It is an opportunity to bring together key local institutions and harness place identity as a motivator for more employers to pay a Living Wage.

15. To become an Action Group member, you must be an accredited Living Wage employer, or agree to become one in 2019, and to attend bi-monthly meetings to create and help deliver a Living Wage Oxford plan. Attendees for the first meeting will include Westgate, Anne Veck Hair Salon, Shirtworks, Good Food Oxford, University of Oxford and the Living Wage Foundation. The first meeting of this group is scheduled 28th March.

16. Oxford focussed research ([See appendix 3](#)). Part funded by Oxford City Council, supported by Oxford University, and commissioned by Good Food Oxford (GFO), this new report (in draft) aims to more clearly understand links between income and food poverty alleviation in the Oxford context. To do this, GFO undertook research to examine the impacts of the Real Living Wage (RLW) on the lives of employees and their impact on businesses in Oxford.

17. Through interviews with 25 people (employees and employers) at accredited Real Living Wage organisations in Oxford, the study also aimed to examine the potential benefits and limitations of the Living Wage, providing informative snapshots of the lives of employees living and working locally. The findings from these interviews confirmed that even Real Living Wage may be insufficient to combat food poverty in Oxford.

18. The study provided a case for the further promotion of the Real Living Wage as an absolute minimum for workers in Oxford. While not directly compared within the study, the Oxford Living Wage makes an important step to acknowledge the high costs of living in the city. However, discussions with employers highlighted concerns on the affordability of introducing this higher wage, particularly within smaller organisations. Therefore, it recommended the advocating and further accreditation of organisations to pay the Real Living Wage must be considered a priority, acting as a stepping stone for wider adoption of the higher Oxford Living Wage.

Next Steps 2019-20

19. Given the known affordability issues in the city and a need for a stepping stone from recognising Real Living Wage employers to Oxford Living Wage payers, officers and members have been considering how best to identify and recognise top rate payers. In April 2019, a self-certification system is planned based on employer self-reporting. Once, complete, the Council will keep a publicly available list of employers paying the Oxford Living Wage based on a signed letter from the company or institution committing to the current Oxford Living Wage. Every November, when the new Living Wage rates are announced, employers can voluntarily renew their commitment to the new rates. The voluntary declaration will include directly-employed staff, and contractors where engaged on a long-term basis. Where not in place there must be a commitment to moving contractors to the Oxford Living Wage when it is practicable. The Council will reserve the right to remove employers from the accredited list if it receives information, or otherwise takes the view, that the employer is not acting as declared.

20. The newly published Local Plan 2036 (examination draft) contains an Employment policy supporting Living Wage adoption by the development sector. Finally, the Chair of the OSP along with Members has been encouraging more University of Oxford Colleges to pay the RLW or OLW. 17 colleges (including the University of Oxford) are now accredited.

Financial Consideration

20. £20,000 has been made available in the new budget to promote the Living Wage in 2019-20. Furthermore, a commitment to paying the Oxford Living Wage has been made in the most recent budget agreed by members and built in to the medium term financial plan.

Legal issues

21. The legal implications of commencing OLW self-certification will be properly explored before commencement.

| | |
|----------------------------|--|
| Report author | Matt Peachey |
| Job title | Economic Development Manager |
| Service area or department | Development Department |
| Telephone | 01865 252 021 |
| e-mail | mpeachey@oxford.gov.uk |

Appendix 1

| Organisation Name | Sector | Industry |
|--|----------------|----------------------|
| Church Mission Society | Third Sector | Charity |
| St Peter's College, Oxford | Third Sector | Higher Education |
| Virtual Alliance Ltd | Private Sector | Schools |
| Global Canopy | Third Sector | Charity |
| Merton College, Oxford University | Public Sector | Higher Education |
| Emmaus Oxford | Third Sector | Charity |
| Shirtworks | Private Sector | Other Private Sector |
| My life choice | Third Sector | Charity |
| Anne Veck Limited | Private Sector | Retail |
| The University of Oxford | Public Sector | Higher Education |
| Oriel College | Public Sector | Higher Education |
| Wadham College | Public Sector | Higher Education |
| Oxford Web Applications | Private Sector | Tech |
| Family Links | Third Sector | Charity |
| Mansfield College, Oxford | Public Sector | Higher Education |
| University College Oxford | Public Sector | Higher Education |
| Hertford College, Oxford | Public Sector | Higher Education |
| St Cross College, University of Oxford | Public Sector | Higher Education |
| The Queen's College, Oxford | Public Sector | Higher Education |
| Christ Church, Oxford | Public Sector | Higher Education |
| Somerville College, Oxford | Public Sector | Higher Education |
| St Hilda's College, Oxford | Public Sector | Higher Education |
| Oxford SU | Public Sector | Higher Education |
| Curtains Made Simple Limited | Private Sector | Online Retailer |
| Oxfam GB | Third Sector | Charity |
| The Ethical Property Company Ltd | Third Sector | Social Enterprise |
| Oxford City Council | Public Sector | Local Authority |
| Jesus College, Oxford | Public Sector | Higher Education |
| WOCA CIO | Third Sector | Charity |
| People & Planet | Third Sector | Charity |
| Auditcare | Private Sector | Care |
| Pedal & Pour Ltd T/APedal & Post | Private Sector | Transport |
| Rogers Metal Management | Private Sector | Manufacturing |
| Pembroke College, Oxford | Public Sector | Higher Education |
| Zacharias Trust | Third Sector | Charity |
| Green Templeton College, Oxford | Public Sector | Higher Education |
| Lincoln College, Oxford | Third Sector | Higher Education |
| Annie Sloan Interiors | Private Sector | Wholesale |
| Arts at the Old Fire Station | Third Sector | Charity |
| OEE Consulting | Private Sector | Consultancy |
| The Ultimate Picture Palace | Private Sector | Other Private Sector |
| Keyation Limited | Private Sector | Care |
| Home Instead Senior Care Oxford | Private Sector | Care |
| Blake Morgan - Oxford | | |
| Lush Oxford | Private Sector | Retail |
| Schroders Oxford | Private Sector | Finance |

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|---|----------------|-----------------------|
| Grant Thornton UK LLP (Oxford) | Private Sector | Professional Services |
| Grant Thornton UK LLP (Oxford - Seacourt) | Private Sector | Professional Services |
| Grant Thornton UK LLP (Oxford) | Private Sector | Professional Services |
| Grant Thornton UK LLP (Oxford - Seacourt) | Private Sector | Professional Services |
| Campion Hall | Third Sector | Religious Institution |
| Annie Sloan Interiors Ltd | | |
| Barclays Bank PLC - Headington | Private Sector | Banking |
| Barclays Bank PLC - Cowley | Private Sector | Banking |
| Barclays Bank PLC - 211/213 Banbury Road | Private Sector | Banking |
| Santander UK - Santander House, Carfax | Private Sector | Banking |
| Santander UK - Gypsy Lane | Private Sector | Banking |
| Santander UK - Oxford | Private Sector | Banking |
| ofo Oxford | Private Sector | Transport |
| The Open University - Oxford | Public Sector | Higher Education |
| Pearson Plc - Pearson Vue Oxford | Private Sector | Media/Comms |
| CPC Project Services LLP - Oxford | Private Sector | Law |
| Oxford - A-Plant Rail | Private Sector | Construction |
| Lloyds Banking Group - Oxford | Private Sector | Finance |
| Lloyds Banking Group - Cowley | Private Sector | Finance |
| Lloyds Banking Group - Headington | Private Sector | Finance |
| Lloyds Banking Group - Summertown | Private Sector | Finance |
| Emmaus Oxford Store | Third Sector | Charity |
| Clyde & Co - Oxford | Private Sector | Law |
| Barclays Bank PLC - Oxford | Private Sector | Banking |
| Pearson Plc - Pearson Education Oxford | Private Sector | Media/Comms |
| T2 Tea - Oxford | Private Sector | Retail |
| Nationwide Building Society - Oxford | Private Sector | Finance |
| Majestic Wine - Oxford | Private Sector | Retail |
| Majestic Wine - 381 Cowley Road | Private Sector | Retail |
| Oxfam Shop - 17 Broad Street | Third Sector | Charity |
| Oxfam Shop - Summertown | Third Sector | Charity |
| Oxfam Shop - Headington | Third Sector | Charity |
| Oxfam Bookshop - 56 St Giles Street | Third Sector | Charity |
| Oxfam Bookshop - 15 Turl Street | Third Sector | Charity |
| Richer Sounds Plc - Oxford | Private Sector | Retail |
| Oxfam Shop On-line - Oxford | Third Sector | Charity |
| Co-operative Bank - Oxford | Private Sector | Banking |
| Penningtons Manches LLP - Oxford | | |
| Super Clean South Ltd | Private Sector | |

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Recognised Service Provider

Appendix 2

Update on progress made against the recommendations of the Scrutiny Committee's Oxford Living Wage Review Group on 20 March 2018.

| Recommendation | Agree | March 2018 Comment: Provided by the Leader | April 2019 Comment: Provided by Matt Peachey, Economic Development Manager |
|--|--------------|---|--|
| 1 - That the Council continues to pay all its staff and agency workers at least the Oxford Living Wage, which should continue to be set at 95% of the London Living Wage rate. | Yes | Existing policy | In place and committed in budget |
| 2 - That the Council includes in its advice to businesses on selling to the Council a statement about the Council being an accredited living wage employer and the benefits of paying the Oxford Living Wage in terms of best value, wellbeing and quality | Yes | We advise our suppliers that they are expected to pay their staff the Oxford Living wage | In place - we advise our suppliers that they are expected to pay their staff the Oxford Living wage and highlight the benefits on our website. |
| 3 - That the Council continues to require suppliers with contract values over £100k to pay their staff and subcontracted staff working on Council projects at least the Oxford Living Wage. | Yes | As above but we cannot enforce this | In place – requested as a requirement but not enforced |
| 4 - That the Council maintains a watching brief on the legal position (including any emerging case law) relating to public bodies requiring contractors to pay their staff a living wage, with a view to strengthening the obligations on the Council's own suppliers and their subcontractors, should the opportunity to do so arise in future. | Yes | Yes, we will continue to review the situation | Situation being monitored on an ongoing basis – checked as of Jan 2019. Status quo for now but legal services continue to monitor emerging case law. |
| 5 – That consideration is given to whether and how the Council could periodically monitor the payment of the Oxford Living | Yes | We will consider whether and how the council might do this. We may seek to obtain confirmation of Living wage | In part as agreed. It has been confirmed a contract term to monitor payment is not legally enforceable, but we still say we |

Appendix 2

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| Wage by suppliers and their subcontractors so that concerns could be raised with suppliers if they were found to not be keeping to their commitments. | | payment from suppliers and contractors by including such provision as a contract term to be agreed between the two parties. | require OLW payment. |
| 6 - That the Council ensures that it remains a fully accredited living wage employer. | Yes | This will continue | In place and committed in 2019 budget |
| 7 - That the Council commits to working with the Living Wage Foundation and the broad coalition of stakeholders, especially local trade unions, on making Oxford a Living Wage City. This could include the City Council promoting the payment of the Foundation's 'Real Living Wage' to local businesses as a step in the right direction towards committing to pay the higher Oxford Living Wage from a future date. | Yes | This is a sensible, staged approach that will support the policy of explaining the Living wage policy to employers, and partnership working to secure a greater level of adoption over time. | Ongoing <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Publically stated intention to become a LWF 'Living Wage City' Set up Living Wage Action Group Living Wage Champion coordinating with wider campaign stakeholders Supported Good Food Oxford LW Research Agreed broad criteria with LWF as part of their pilot 'places' scheme Inclusive employer group set up under OSP/economic growth board Living wage campaign week and events held One to one meetings with employers including offered and ongoing LWF support. |
| 8 - That the Council creates, maintains and promotes a list of local employers paying the Oxford Living Wage and makes this list available on the Council website, and newsletter, as well as linking to the Living Wage Foundation's map of employers paying the Real Living Wage. | In part | This can be managed by the Economic Development Team with input from other parts of the Council. We would not set up a separate list but provide a link on the council website to the Living Wage Foundation (LWF). LWF are the accrediting body so we would promote their list of accredited employers locally | Original CEB response - We would not set up a separate list but provide a link on the council website to the Living Wage Foundation (LWF). LWF are the accrediting body so we would promote their list of accredited employers locally. In 2019 an OLW List will be created. |
| 9 - That the Council makes it very clear | Yes | The Charity Leaders Forum is considering | The Charity Leaders Forum has made a |

Appendix 2

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| that in most circumstances grants will only be awarded to organisations paying their employed staff no less than the Oxford Living Wage, and contacts other local public sector commissioners urging them to do likewise. | | whether they can make a formal commitment on behalf of their members. However, the Council's grants programme involves a great many bodies employing volunteers, staff members and pro bono workers and it would be very difficult to impose this requirement. We suggest instead that we make it clear in the grant letters that employed staff should normally be paid at least the Real Living Wage, and preferably, the OLW. | formal commitment to paying the OLW. However, the Council's grants programme involves a great many bodies employing volunteers, staff members and pro bono workers and it would be very difficult to impose this requirement. We suggest instead that we make it clear in the grant letters that employed staff should normally be paid at least the Real Living Wage, and preferably, the OLW. |
| 10 - That the Council puts the issue of the Oxford Living Wage and the Real Living Wage on the agenda of the Economic Growth Steering Group to seek ongoing input into ways of boosting its adoption. | Yes | We are asking the Economic Growth Steering group to set up a Task and Finish group on actions employers can take to support a fairer economy. Living Wage will be a key part of that agenda. | The Economic Growth Board agreed to set up a Task and Finish group on actions employers can take to support a fairer economy. Living Wage is a key part of that agenda and progress is reported to the Board. |
| 11 - That the Council hosts an annual Oxford Living Wage seminar or symposium, which could involve local employers, trade unions, campaigners, universities, faith leaders and the Living Wage Foundation, to monitor progress and promote the case for the Oxford Living Wage and encourage employers to sign up to that or the Real Living Wage. | In part | We will aim to ensure that we hold an annual event, in partnership with others as appropriate, targeting employers who wish to discuss workforce issues relating to pay, recruitment practices, training and development, and ways of making the most of their workforce within the CSR context. The OLW can be a key part of this discussion, but other aspects of the wider agenda will also be important to secure business engagement. | Event held at Said Business School with LWF 69 registrations and 40 attendees. |
| 12 - That the Council allocates responsibility to a designated officer to support and oversee the promotion of the Real Living Wage and the Oxford Living Wage. This should include a suite of 'business as usual' activities, as well as specific campaigns, for example around | Yes | The Economic Team can identify an officer to work with colleagues to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Undertake promotion during living wage week • Promote living wage adoption as part of ongoing | The Economic Development Team is leading on this activity. |

Appendix 2

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| Living Wage Week (building on the successful communications campaign of Living Wage Week 2017). | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Commission Research into the barriers to living wage adoption and seek a best practice approaches in line with the agreed recommendations (see 13) • Monitor the RLW accreditation measures over time. • Undertake one related event per annum (see item 11). | |
| 13 - That the Council commits to flying the Living Wage Employer flag when pay rates are raised every April. Consideration should also be given to flying the Living Wage Employer flag during part or all of Living Wage Week (which would require resolving a clash with an existing commitment to fly the Royal British Legion flag during the same week). | In part | This will be considered on each annual occasion that a new rate is announced and will be done if there is flagpole capacity and no precedence given to another organisation's flag. The commitment to fly the Royal British Legion flag in the week of Remembrance Sunday will not change. | This has been agreed. |
| 14 – That CEB identifies a specific member to lead on the LW/OLW | Yes | Cllr Martyn Rush is the Living Wage Champion with a well- defined role to promote, coordinate campaigns, and help build community capability around Living Wage | See previous response. |

Appendix 3

A Life on The Living Wage

**Assessing the impact of the Real Living Wage on employee wellbeing,
related household food security, and workplace productivity in
Oxford**

Dr Laura Green for Good Food Oxford
March 2019

Supported and funded by:

Oxford City Council and University of Oxford Environmental Change Institute

Executive Summary

This study was funded by Oxford City Council, supported by the University of Oxford's internship programme, and commissioned by Good Food Oxford (GFO).

GFO aims to identify and catalyse actions by individuals and organisations that promote a healthy, fair, ethical and environmentally sustainable food system in and around Oxford*. One of GFO's three Strategic Objectives is to address causes of food poverty in the city to ensure fair access to food for all. Previous research⁺ identified low incomes relative to the high costs of living in Oxford as a main driver of food poverty in the city. Within these studies, it was also revealed how many local families with stretched finances frequently compromise on the quality of their diets, exposing them to greater risks of poor physical and mental health. GFO believes that fair pay that is in line with actual living costs is essential to combat food poverty and to improve access to affordable healthy food in Oxford.

To more clearly understand links between income and food poverty alleviation in a local Oxford context, GFO undertook research to examine the impacts of the Real Living Wage (RLW) on the lives of employees and the running of businesses in Oxford. The RLW is a voluntary hourly pay rate calculated according to average costs of living in the UK, with a separate higher rate also calculated for the London region (London Living Wage). The rates are overseen by the Living Wage Foundation, which offers an accreditation scheme and announces new rates each year to ensure that employees continue to receive a rate of pay in line with actual living costs. This study aimed to assess the impacts of the RLW on employee wellbeing and related household food security. The research also considered employer perspectives, by further assessing the impacts of the RLW upon workplace productivity.

Through desk-based research, a key objective was to compare the affordability of a healthy balanced diet when living in Oxford on three different wages; the National Living Wage (NLW), the Real Living Wage (RLW) and the Oxford Living Wage (OLW). Typical household expenditures for the UK were obtained from the Minimum Income Standard, a public consultation method used to inform the Real Living Wage calculations. When considering an Oxford context, it became clear that the cost of housing was significantly underestimated within UK-wide estimates. Once greater housing costs were taken into account, it emerged that even those in receipt of the higher Oxford Living Wage would struggle to afford a fully balanced diet (as recommended by the government's Eatwell Guide) and would require the sacrifice of other non-essential categories of spending (e.g. social activities, clothing).

Through interviews with 25 people (employees and employers) at accredited Real Living Wage organisations in Oxford, the study also aimed to examine the potential benefits and limitations of the Living Wage, providing informative snapshots of the lives of employees living and working locally. The findings from these interviews demonstrated that even a Living Wage may be insufficient to combat food poverty in Oxford. The study recognised a number of people who were financially insecure, often linked to a lack of savings, with some at serious risk of food poverty

* See <http://goodfoodoxford.org/about-us/>

⁺D. Lalor, 2014. *Feeding the Gaps: Food Poverty and Food Surplus Redistribution in Oxford*; F. Hansford and R. Friedman, 2015. *Food Poverty in Oxford: A Qualitative Study in Barton and Rose Hill With Recommendations for Good Food Oxford*.

during periods of financial strain. Impacts upon household food security were identified, such as the reduction of dietary quality and the reduction of food consumed (i.e. skipping meals) to save money.

The study provides a clear case for the further promotion of the Real Living Wage as an absolute minimum for workers in Oxford, with the Oxford Living Wage being preferable. While not directly compared within the study, the Oxford Living Wage is an important uplift to acknowledge the high costs of living in the city. However, discussions with employers highlighted concerns on the affordability of introducing this higher wage, particularly within smaller organisations. Therefore, the advocacy and further accreditation of organisations to pay the Real Living Wage must be considered a priority, acting as an important stepping stone for reaching wider adoption of the higher Oxford Living Wage.

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1. Introduction

While recent estimates of unemployment in Oxford (3.1%) fall below the national average (4.3%)¹, the potential negative impacts of in-work poverty upon physical and mental wellbeing present major public health concerns for the city and its local businesses². The high rental market in Oxford, which for the UK is almost only exceeded by boroughs of London³, poses a unique challenge in the absence of a 'London weighting'-style supplement for wages. Imbalances in the structure of Oxford's labour market that offer limited opportunities for intermediary level jobs⁴ further exacerbate this problem with larger proportions of low-income workers struggling to meet the basic costs of living. While many factors contribute towards employee wellbeing, lower wages have been associated with higher instances of stress and general poor health⁵, which have significant implications for workplace productivity. This study considers the role of household food security and nutrition in maintaining employee health and wellbeing, and the extent that introduction of the Real Living Wage influences the feasibility of attaining a healthy diet while living in Oxford.

A number of recently conducted Oxford-based studies emphasised how many families with stretched finances frequently compromised on the quality of their diets, exposing them to greater risks of poor physical and mental health⁶. Poor employee health may generate numerous negative effects upon levels of productivity in the workplace, including greater absences through sickness, or alternatively 'presenteeism', when employees attend work while in suboptimal health⁷. A combination of low wages met with increasing food prices are adding further strains upon sustaining a healthy diet to achieve optimum health. Nutritional guidance provided by the government's Eatwell Guide has been identified as costly to attain for many UK families; a recent study revealed how households earning less than £15,860 per year (above the National Living Wage) supporting children would need to devote at least 42% of after-housing disposable income on food to meet these recommendations⁸. In the first part of this report, the ability to afford this proposed diet alongside Oxford living costs will be assessed in relation to three separate wage thresholds: the National Living Wage (NLW), the Real Living Wage (RLW) and the Oxford Living Wage (OLW).

¹ Oxford City Council, 2018. *Economic Statistics*.

https://www.oxford.gov.uk/info/20124/economy/454/economic_statistics.

² D. Lalor, 2014. *Feeding the Gaps: Food Poverty and Food Surplus Redistribution in Oxford*. Oxford: Good Food Oxford; F. Hansford and R. Friedman, 2015. *Food Poverty in Oxford: A Qualitative Study in Barton and Rose Hill With Recommendations for Good Food Oxford*. Oxford: Good Food Oxford.

³ Valuation Office Agency, 2017. *Private Rental Market Summary Statistics – April 2016 to March 2017*.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/private-rental-market-summary-statistics-april-2016-to-march-2017>.

⁴ M. Fransham, 2015. Our Changing City. *Social Trends in Oxford. Oxford Strategic Partnership. Oxford City Council*; Hansford and Friedman 2015.

⁵ T. Chandola and N. Zhang, 2018. Re-Employment, Job Quality, Health and Allostatic Load Biomarkers: Prospective Evidence from the UK Household Longitudinal Study. *International Journal of Epidemiology* 47, no. 1: 47–57; British Medical Association, 2017. *Health at a Price: Reducing the Impact of Poverty*.

⁶ Lalor 2014; Hansford and Friedman 2015; C. M. Heflin, K. Siefert, and D. R. Williams, 2005. Food Insufficiency and Women's Mental Health: Findings from a 3-Year Panel of Welfare Recipients. *Social Science & Medicine* 61: 1971–82.

⁷ M. Hafner, C. van Stolk, C. Saunders, J. Krapels and B. Baruch, 2015. *Health, Wellbeing and Productivity in the Workplace*. Cambridge: RAND Europe.

⁸ C. Scott, J. Sutherland, and A. Taylor 2018. *Affordability of the UK's Eatwell Guide*. The Food Foundation.

The central part of the study presents the findings from a series of interviews undertaken with employees and employers at accredited Real Living Wage organisations in Oxford, which offer informative snapshots of the lives of low-income workers in the city. The interviews explored the impacts that paying the Living Wage had upon employee wellbeing, with particular emphasis on food access and the perceived ability to maintain a healthy and balanced diet. Interviews with employers considered the motivations behind these wage commitments, as well as crucially the potential benefits that these wage introductions may have had upon local businesses and organisations.

1.1 The Living Wage

The UK campaign for a Living Wage first emerged as a grassroots movement in East London in 2001⁹. In a landmark meeting, the organisation Citizens UK amassed leaders from local faith groups, schools and other local institutions to discuss issues affecting their local community¹⁰. At a time when the government's minimum wage was just £3.70 an hour, low pay was recognised as a significant concern relating to local poverty issues, subsequently prompting calls for major employers in the capital to pay their staff a London Living Wage¹¹. In 2011 the campaign became national, with the announcement of the first UK-wide Living Wage rates and the establishment of the Living Wage Foundation¹².

1.1.1 Real Living Wage

The **Real Living Wage** (RLW) is a voluntary hourly pay rate calculated according to average costs of living in the UK, with a separate higher rate also calculated for the London region (London Living Wage). New rates are announced annually by the Living Wage Foundation in November, reflecting inflation and any rises in living costs. These independently calculated rates¹³ are informed by **Minimum Income Standard** (MIS) research carried out by The Centre for Research in Social Policy (CRSP) (see below, 2.2), which considers a variety of household types to reflect the diversity of families across the UK¹⁴. This hourly rate is distinct from the government's lower **National Living Wage** (NLW), which contrary to its name, acts as a minimum wage for workers over the age of 25¹⁵. Employers who pay all their staff¹⁶ at least the Real Living Wage rate can become accredited through the Living Wage Foundation; this requires committing to rises in the minimum rate each year. There are currently over 4,700 Living Wage employers across the UK, with 68 of these based (or having branches) in Oxford¹⁷.

⁹ Citizens UK, 2017. *The Living Wage Campaign*. https://www.citizensuk.org/the_living_wage_campaign_rix_u-igroucqykv7quhtq.

¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹ Ibid.

¹² Living Wage Foundation, 2018. *Living Wage Foundation History*. <https://www.livingwage.org.uk/history>.

¹³ The rates are independently calculated by the Resolution Foundation and are overseen by the Living Wage Commission: <http://www.livingwage.org.uk/living-wage-commission>.

¹⁴ C. D. Arcy and D. Finch, 2017. *Calculating a Living Wage for London and the Rest of the UK*. Resolution Foundation.

¹⁵ Rather than relating to living costs, the National Living Wage is calculated based on targets to reach 60% of median earnings by 2020.

¹⁶ This also includes staff from external contractors who regularly work on the premises.

¹⁷ Pers. comm. Sebastian Bachelier, Living Wage Foundation.

1.1.2 Oxford Living Wage

The **Oxford Living Wage** (OLW), established in 2009 by Oxford City Council, emerged as a local hourly rate of pay as formal recognition of the high living costs associated with the city¹⁸. The voluntary rate is based on ninety-five percent of the London Living Wage rate, a calculation deemed sufficient to enable employees and their families to live free from poverty¹⁹. The new rates are announced annually alongside the two Real Living Wage rates in November. As there is no formal accreditation system it is very difficult to assess the number of employers in Oxford which currently pay all their staff an Oxford Living Wage. Notable employers paying the rate include Oxford City Council, and the private University of Oxford halls Campion Hall and Blackfriars.

¹⁸ Oxford City Council, 2018. *Report of the Oxford Living Wage Review Group for Scrutiny Committee - Tuesday 6 March 2018*.

¹⁹ Oxford City Council, 2018. *Council to Increase the Oxford Living Wage to £10.02 an Hour*.

Table 1.1 – A summary of wage rates for 2019/20. The updated Real Living Wage and Oxford Living Wage rates were announced in November 2018, to be implemented by April 2019.

| | The Minimum Wage | National Living Wage | Real Living Wage | Oxford Living Wage |
|--------------------------------|---------------------------------|-------------------------------------|---------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| What is it? | £7.38 | £7.83 | £9.00 | £10.02 |
| Is it the law? | Yes | Yes | Voluntary | Voluntary |
| What age group is covered? | 21 and older | 25 and older | 18 and older | 18 and older |
| Gross yearly salary (35 hours) | £13,412 | £14,251 | £16,380 | £18,236 |

2. Affordability of the Eatwell Guide in Oxford

2.1 Affordability of the UK's Eatwell Guide

A recent report by Scott *et al.* 2018 (The Food Foundation) titled '*Affordability of the UK's Eatwell Guide*'²⁰ emphasised the large proportions required from low-income salaries to purchase a 'healthy balanced diet' as outlined by the government's Eatwell Guide²¹. The Eatwell Guide offers official guidance on the latest dietary recommendations using a visual format (Appendix 1) that summarises the five main food groups (i.e. fruit and vegetables; potatoes, bread, rice, pasta and other starchy carbohydrates; beans, pulses, fish, eggs, meat and other proteins; dairy and alternatives; and oils and spreads) and their suggested proportions within the diet. Based on food prices in 2016, it was estimated that this recommended diet would cost a single adult £5.99 per day, or £41.93 per week (Table 2.1)²². The figures were calculated on a per portion basis (e.g. cost of a single portion of bread) so are likely to underestimate total up-front costs (e.g. a loaf of bread), particularly for a single person²³.

Table 2.1 – Estimated weekly costs of the Eatwell Guide for individuals and family members who share meals (based on prices in 2016) (Scarborough *et al.*, 2016; Scott *et al.* 2018).

| | Eatwell Guide cost (£/week) |
|--------------------|--|
| First adult | 41.93 |
| Partner/spouse | 26.81 |
| Other second adult | 31.62 |
| Third adult | 28.87 |
| Subsequent adults | 24.75 |
| Child 0-1 years | 6.19 |
| Child 2-4 years | 12.37 |
| Child 5-7 years | 14.43 |
| Child 8-10 years | 15.81 |
| Child 11-12 years | 17.18 |
| Child 13-15 years | 18.56 |
| Child 16-18 years | 24.75 |

²⁰ C. Scott, J. Sutherland, and A. Taylor 2018. *Affordability of the UK's Eatwell Guide*. The Food Foundation.

²¹ Public Health England, 2016. *The Eatwell Guide*; Public Health England, 2016. *From Plate to Guide: What, Why and How for the Eatwell Model*.

²² P. Scarborough *et al.* 2016. Eatwell Guide: Modelling the Dietary and Cost Implications of Incorporating New Sugar and Fibre Guidelines. *BMJ Open* 6: 1–10.

²³ Scott *et al.* 2018.

In the Scott *et al.* study, these estimated costs were examined in relation to UK data²⁴ for disposable income (after housing costs), which considered different household compositions (e.g. single adults, two adults with children etc.). Findings from the study revealed that the poorest half of households in the UK would need to spend close to 30% of their disposable income to afford the Eatwell Guide. These figures rise to as much as 42% for households with children in the bottom two deciles (earning less than £15,860 per year); this includes households with one full-time working adult earning above the National Living Wage. Comparisons with UK data for household expenditure on food and non-alcoholic drinks from the Living Costs and Food Survey (2015/16)²⁵ indicated that almost half of UK households (47%) were not spending enough on food to meet the Eatwell Guide. While there are likely to be a wide range of factors to explain these findings (e.g. poor diets, selection of cheaper ingredients), it is clear that alongside current rising food costs, the Eatwell Guide may be increasingly unaffordable for many households.

2.2 Minimum Income Standard

The Minimum Income Standard (MIS), from which the Real Living Wage rates are largely based, presents comparable figures for food costs in its calculated budgets. The purpose of this public consultation method is to establish the minimum income to achieve an ‘acceptable standard of living’ in the UK²⁶. The research is carried out by The Centre for Research in Social Policy (CRSP) and is updated each year to account for rising living costs (e.g. due to inflation). The 2016 figures proposed a weekly budget of £44.72 for a single person to spend on food²⁷, exceeding the estimated cost to afford the Eatwell Guide (Table 2.1). With a yearly gross income of £17,311 equivalent to £8.85 per hour²⁸, this food budget reflects 24% of after housing disposable income. The remaining largest expenditures within the weekly disposable income budget include social and cultural participation (25%), travel (15%) and fuel (9%). However, it must be noted that different household compositions are likely to incur very different financial costs (e.g. childcare).

2.2.1 A Minimum Income Standard for Oxford

The MIS is created for the UK as a whole and therefore does not account for the highly variable living costs affecting different cities. With Oxford recently ranked as the least affordable city in the UK²⁹, it can be argued that these budget estimates do not adequately reflect typical household expenditures for those living in the city. Considering the example of a single person renting, £87.68 is accounted to cover rental costs (based on median figures for the UK) in the 2016 MIS budget. In Oxford, the median weekly rental cost for a room in a shared property is

²⁴ Data was from the ‘Households Below Average Income’ (HBAI) publication by the Department for Work and Pensions (2018). See Scott *et al.* 2018 for further details.

²⁵ Office for National Statistics 2017.

²⁶ Joseph Rowntree Foundation, 2018. *A Minimum Income Standard for the UK 2008-2018: Continuity and Change*.

²⁷ Minimum Income Standard 2016.

²⁸ This hourly rate was calculated for a single adult by the Minimum Income Standard in 2016, exceeding the 2015/16 Real Living Wage rate at £8.25.

²⁹ Lloyds Bank’s Affordable Cities Review 2018.

38% higher than this at £121.15³⁰. When these higher housing costs are taken into account within the MIS budget (Table 2.2), the amount of disposable income allocated for food is squeezed to £36.57 for an individual, making the Eatwell Guide unaffordable unless other expenses (e.g. social and cultural participation, fuel, clothing) are compromised. These kinds of trade-offs are common in low-income households and have the potential to negatively impact physical and mental wellbeing³¹. To achieve a comparable standard of living as set by MIS in 2016, a single person renting in Oxford would need to earn an extra £2,600 per year than the suggested MIS wage (£19,911 pa; £10.21 per hour).

Table 2.2 – Suggested minimum costs for a single person to achieve an ‘acceptable standard of living’ in the UK, as set by the Minimum Income Standard (MIS). Using percentages for each category as a guide (excl. rent and council tax), the budget has been further adjusted to account for median rental costs in Oxford. Costs are based on 2015/16 data. *Council tax was kept consistent as people have limited control over these costs.

| Categories of household expenditure | Budget (£/week) Single person (UK) | % of budget (excl. housing) | Budget (£/week) Single person (Oxford) |
|---|---------------------------------------|-----------------------------|---|
| Food | 44.72 | 24.4 | 36.57 |
| Alcohol | 4.89 | 2.7 | 4.00 |
| Clothing | 7.12 | 3.9 | 5.82 |
| Water rates | 5.67 | 3.1 | 4.63 |
| Household insurances | 1.21 | 0.7 | 0.99 |
| Fuel | 15.96 | 8.7 | 13.05 |
| Other housing costs | 1.95 | 1.1 | 1.59 |
| Household goods | 12.19 | 6.6 | 9.97 |
| Household services | 2.96 | 1.6 | 2.42 |
| Personal goods and services | 14.00 | 7.6 | 11.45 |
| Other travel costs | 26.89 | 14.6 | 21.99 |
| Social and cultural participation | 46.11 | 25.1 | 37.71 |
| Council tax* | 15.19 | - | 15.19 |
| Rent | 87.68 | - | 121.15 |
| Total disposable income | 286.53 | - | 286.53 |
| Disposable income, excl. UK median rent | 198.85 | - | - |
| Disposable income, excl. Oxford median rent | - | - | 165.38 |

³⁰ Private Rental Market Statistics 2015/16.

³¹ W. Anderson, V. White, and A. Finney, 2010. *'You Just Have to Get by' Coping with Low Incomes and Cold Homes*. Centre for Sustainable Energy.

2.3 Affordability of the Eatwell Guide in Oxford

Based on 2015/16 rates, the affordability of the Eatwell Guide for the example of a single person renting in Oxford was assessed in relation to three different full-time wages; the National Living Wage (NLW), the Real Living Wage (RLW) and the Oxford Living Wage (OLW). When categories of spending are kept proportionally consistent with the 2015/16 MIS report, all three budgets fall short of affording the Eatwell Guide once Oxford housing costs are considered. While working full-time on the NLW, only £25.97 would be allocated for food purchases each week, 62% of the amount calculated to afford the Eatwell Guide. To meet this cost, 60% of the money allocated for social and cultural participation would need to be sacrificed leaving £10.82 for the week, or alternatively a combination of savings elsewhere (e.g. alcohol, clothing, personal goods and services). Those working full-time on the RLW fared slightly better, with a smaller food budget deficit of £9.38. If this amount was saved from the budget for social and cultural participation, it would still leave £24.18 to spend each week. A full-time employee earning the OLW would marginally exceed the minimum wage set by the MIS budget in 2016, though it similarly fails to allocate enough to meet the Eatwell Guide once Oxford rental costs are taken into account. A further £5.24 would be required to meet the full estimated costs for the Eatwell Guide, which if taken from the social and cultural participation budget would leave £32.59 remaining each week.

Table 2.3 – Suggested allocation of a single person’s weekly budget as set by the Minimum Income Standard (MIS), including adjustments to account for median rental costs in Oxford. The percentages for each category (excl. rent and council tax) as set by the MIS have been applied to three full-time wages; the National Living Wage (NLW), the Real Living Wage (RLW) and the Oxford Living Wage (OLW). Wage rates and estimated costs are based on 2015/16 data. *Council tax was kept consistent as people have limited control over these costs.

| Categories of household expenditure | Weekly budget (£) (MIS) | Weekly budget (£) (NLW) | Weekly budget (£) (RLW) | Weekly budget (£) (OLW) |
|---|-------------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------|
| Food | 36.57 | 25.97 | 32.55 | 36.69 |
| Alcohol | 4.00 | 2.84 | 3.56 | 4.01 |
| Clothing | 5.82 | 4.13 | 5.18 | 5.84 |
| Water rates | 4.63 | 3.29 | 4.12 | 4.65 |
| Household insurances | 0.99 | 0.70 | 0.88 | 0.99 |
| Fuel | 13.05 | 9.27 | 11.61 | 13.09 |
| Other housing costs | 1.59 | 1.13 | 1.42 | 1.60 |
| Household goods | 9.97 | 7.08 | 8.87 | 10.00 |
| Household services | 2.42 | 1.72 | 2.16 | 2.43 |
| Personal goods and services | 11.45 | 8.13 | 10.19 | 11.48 |
| Other travel costs | 21.99 | 15.62 | 19.57 | 22.06 |
| Social and cultural participation | 37.71 | 26.78 | 33.56 | 37.83 |
| Council tax* | 15.19 | 15.19 | 15.19 | 15.19 |
| Rent | 121.15 | 121.15 | 121.15 | 121.15 |
| Total disposable income | 286.53 | 243 | 270 | 287 |
| Disposable income, excl. Oxford housing | 150.19 | 106.66 | 133.66 | 150.66 |

| | | | | |
|------------------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| Hourly rate (£) | 8.85 | 7.20 | 8.25 | 8.93 |
| Annual salary (gross) | 17,311 | 14,040 | 16,088 | 17,414 |

2.4 Summary comparisons

To summarise, table 2.4 below compares the scenarios outlined above using data from tables 2.1, 2.2 and 2.3. These are weekly figures, adjusted for Oxford, for a single person renting their accommodation.

Table 2.4 – Summary comparisons of the affordability of the Eatwell Guide and subsequent deficit to be taken from social and cultural participation

| Income scenarios | Recommended weekly budget (£) (MIS) | Oxford weekly budget (£) (NLW) | Oxford weekly budget (£) (RLW) | Oxford weekly budget (£) (OLW) |
|---|--|---------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| Allocated for food | 49.29 | 25.97 | 32.55 | 36.69 |
| Percentage of Eatwell Guide | 118% | 62% | 78% | 88% |
| Deficit – taken from social and cultural budget | N/A | 15.96 | 9.38 | 5.24 |
| Left to spend on social and cultural budget | 46.11 | 10.82 | 24.18 | 32.59 |

This crude assessment of household expenditure for the example of a single full-time employee demonstrates some of the challenges for low-income workers in Oxford to afford a healthy balanced diet. While the Eatwell Guide is technically affordable for a single person on all three wages, it requires sacrifice in other areas of the budget to meet this cost – deficits of approximately £15.00, £10.00 or £5.00 a week for each of the wage scenarios. While not ideal, the extent of savings required when receiving the RLW or OLW would be fairly minimal. However, when receiving the NLW the deficit in food budget would be more noticeable, requiring greater reductions in non-essential expenditure, such as spending on personal items and social activities.

2.5 Additional modelling for different household compositions

To consider the potential strains upon different kinds of households in Oxford the example of a couple with one child, receiving a combined income based on one full-time (37.5 hours) and one part-time (22.5 hours – 3 days) wage, was also explored³². The estimated food costs for affording the Eatwell Guide for a couple and one child (2-4 years) is £81.11 per week, which is similarly reflected in the MIS budget (£82.14). However, the MIS report recommends a minimum income of £21,400 for each adult to afford standard expenses for this household type (including childcare). Costs for renting a two-bedroom property in Oxford are extremely high, with a median cost of £253.85 per week; this is 76% higher than the UK median and 196% higher than the amount (£85.83) allocated by the MIS budget for a couple with one child. With

³² This example is a rough estimate using MIS data (2016) and Private Rental Market Statistics 2015/16. It does not take into account finer details such as tax breaks or subsidised childcare etc.

rental costs greatly underestimated within the MIS budget, it is clear that the Eatwell Guide would be largely unattainable for many low-income families in Oxford.

If both adults earned the OLW as their hourly rate this would give a combined weekly income of £482 after deductions (£27,862 gross p.a.). Once housing costs (rent and council tax) are excluded, this leaves a disposable income of £204.53 per week for the whole family. This figure would need to account for all other household expenses including childcare. The MIS proposes a budget of £122.72 to cover three days of childcare³³, leaving only £81.81 to purchase food and all other bills. Cheaper rent and childcare would have to be sought (e.g. caring by a family member) to meet the Eatwell Guide on this income. Even when childcare is excluded from the calculations, there would still be a food budget deficit of £26.25, requiring the reduction of further expenses to attain the recommended diet.

Another demographic group which would likely to struggle to afford the Eatwell Guide is low-income workers under the age of 25 who earn below the NLW. In 2016, the Minimum Wage for those aged 21-25 years old was £6.70 per hour; £5.30 per hour for those aged 18-20 years old. Following the same proportional calculations as described above, only £21.81 and £14.04 respectively would be allocated for food. For the 18-20-year-old group, even sacrificing almost all non-essential expenditure (i.e. social and cultural participation, personal goods and services, clothing, alcohol) would not be sufficient to afford the Eatwell Guide. People in these low-income groups would be likely to require additional financial help, such as subsidised housing (i.e. with family) or welfare benefits to maintain an acceptable quality of life.

³³ This is based on a calculation of £211.03 per week for full-time workers.

3. Methods and Sampling

3.1 Methods

The central part of this project was a qualitative study using semi-structured interviews from employers and employees. 25 participants were interviewed in total, comprising nine people who provided an employer perspective for their organisations and 16 associated employees. The aims of the research and how the information would be used were fully explained to each participant before the interviews commenced. Written consent for data protection purposes was obtained prior to the interview. Explicit permission was also acquired from the interviewees to use anonymised quotes in the report. We collected basic anonymised sociodemographic data about the 16 employees interviewed to allow the sample to be characterised, and to enable greater understanding of the varied circumstances of low-income workers in Oxford.

The interviews were conducted between 16th October and 5th November 2018. Interviews were recorded and lasted between 10 and 45 minutes, though most were around 20 to 30 minutes. A separate set of questions was posed to employers and employees. The employer questions were mainly posed at an organisational level and focused on three main themes:

1. Motivations of the organisation to become an accredited Living Wage Employer;
2. Evidence for impacts of the Real Living Wage on employee wellbeing and motivation;
3. Personal thoughts on paying staff a Living Wage.

The employee set of questions examined the personal experiences of the interviewee more closely and covered four main areas:

1. Views on current job role and the Real Living Wage;
2. Money management and associated lifestyle;
3. Food purchasing and diet;
4. Wellbeing and the relevance of financial income.

3.2 Sampling

Forty-two organisations based in Oxford were contacted directly from the list of accredited Living Wage employers, of which nine agreed to participate. Four of these organisations paid all their staff an Oxford Living Wage, but owing to the small sample size, direct comparisons were not explored between the RLW and OLW in the findings. The nine organisations covered different sectors, including three organisations from the private sector, two from the public sector, and four from the third sector. The sample was largely opportunistic and relied on the willingness of organisations to take part. It reflects a variety of organisation sizes; two large (over 250 employees), one medium (50-249 employees), four small (10-49 employees), and two micro (0-9 employees). The staff interviewed to provide an organisational perspective were either company directors, managers, or were responsible for recruitment.

The primary aim was to speak to employees earning between £8.75 and £10, reflecting the Real Living Wage rate for 2018/19 up to those earning just above the Oxford Living Wage. The employees interviewed were chiefly selected by the organisations themselves. Selection was either through direct requests by management staff, or by employees coming forward after details of the study were circulated. Three participants were approached by the researcher directly after receiving consent from the employer.

The full sample size (25 participants) was largely dictated by budget and time constraints. Incentives in the form of a free hot drink voucher were used to encourage further employee participation. As the sample was largely self-selecting, it was difficult to directly target a range of socioeconomic backgrounds. The full sample (see Appendix 2) consists of slightly more female (56%) participants than male (44%) overall, but when separated into employers and employees, female participants dominated the employee category forming around two thirds of those interviewed (63%). There were slightly more male (56%) employer participants than female (44%).

Further socioeconomic data was recorded for the 16 employees. The sample includes a wide variety of age groups, with each decade represented by the respondents from 19 to 58 years. A large proportion of the interviewees were White British (63%), however there was also representation from other ethnicities and countries of origin; 31% of the employees listed their country of origin outside of the UK and 19% were from Black, Asian, Mixed or Other ethnic groups. The employee sample included a wide range of education levels, from no formal qualifications up to PhD level; over half (56%) of the participants had advanced level qualifications (i.e. degree level or above).

As the sample size is relatively small it is not representative of all Living Wage employers and employees working in Oxford, so our findings cannot be generalised more broadly across the city. Nevertheless, these accounts provide illuminating snapshots of the lives of low-income workers in Oxford. It must be noted that the nature of the selection process, which relied heavily on the willingness of organisations to participate, may have created a bias in the sample towards organisations where introduction of the Real Living Wage has been more successful. Therefore, these findings may not reflect the full extent of views on the Real Living Wage in Oxford.

4. Research Findings

4.1 Impacts of a Living Wage on employee wellbeing

4.1.1 Reflections on financial security and related wellbeing

The employee interviews explored a range of issues relating to job satisfaction, lifestyle and general wellbeing. How the respondents reflected on these issues largely depended on the nature of their personal circumstances, which varied widely within the sample. Around a third of the interviewees were full-time workers, whose situations largely differed according to whether they were renting their own property or living with family members, which incurred lower housing costs. The further two-thirds of the interviewees worked part-time; of these some relied solely on their own income, while others shared incomes with family members. Reasons for working part-time included working around other commitments, such as studying and caring responsibilities, as well as meeting the requirements to continue to receive welfare benefits.

Full-time workers

When asked directly, most of this small sample of full-time workers believed themselves to be fully financially independent. All interviewed in this category were living as single persons without any dependents. Most cited food as their biggest monthly expense after housing costs, but other large expenditures included car running expenses, loan repayments and savings. The majority were able to save at least a small amount of their monthly income, ranging from 10% to as much as 50%. For some, these savings would be used in the case of a large unexpected expense (e.g. appliance breakdown). One person in their early twenties was unable to save and cited monthly debt repayments as their main reason for not doing so. This individual was particularly vulnerable to increases in monthly expenses, with limited options if a large unexpected bill arrived:

"I would try and stretch the food budget a lot more".

Those able to save greater amounts had reduced monthly outgoings due to subsidised housing costs, such as living with parents or other family members. Some expressed that their smaller housing expenses put them in a particularly fortunate financial position compared with others on comparable salaries in the city:

"Luckily, I live at home, so I don't really have too many outgoings...There's a lot of people who are not in the same position as me who would really struggle",

"I've lived in my council flat for 10 years, wow am I lucky, the state of Oxford!".

Most of the respondents thought that their financial income was very important for sustaining good physical and mental wellbeing. In some cases, this was related to the amount of choice they were able to have on spending related to their wellbeing, e.g. specific foods, sport or social activities.

"You need money for everything, it keeps you healthy pretty much",

"You could go running or stuff, but you wouldn't be able to afford the gym",

"I'm quite big on eating well, making food fresh".

Others mentioned the importance of having financial freedom, such as being able to spend without guilt or worry, or having savings to fall back on:

"Even something little like let's go get a coffee",

"I can spend my money on whatever I want",

"It gives you peace of mind, I've got a little bit for a rainy day".

Part-time workers

The individual circumstances of the part-time workers were highly diverse and reflected a range of working hours, from 10 to 30 hours per week. The interviewee with the fewest number of hours was a student working to supplement their student finances. At the other end, the individual working 30 hours had recently had these increased after an elderly relative had passed away. Around half of the part-time workers had children living with them, ranging from two to twenty-eight years of age. All of the parents interviewed shared income with either a partner or other family members, and those with adult children received some financial contribution. Most in this group were responsible for paying for private accommodation, either by themselves or jointly with a partner, so their part-time wages were considered to be essential:

"Oh gosh, I have to work! I'm going to work until I'm ninety probably",

"It's essential because if I didn't have this basic level of income, I couldn't pay rent and my partner's income can't extend to pay [my] rent",

"My salary covers my rent, that's it... there's no money left over from that".

A small number of individuals had subsidised housing costs, either by living with family members or through social housing. Three interviewees received welfare benefits, of which one considered their work-based income as supplementary rather than critical for everyday expenses.

When asked if they considered themselves to be financially independent, the majority of part-time workers interviewed declared that they were heavily reliant on shared income from others, such as a partner or other family members, or from other funding sources. The small number of people living predominantly off their own wages could be identified as having the poorest quality of life of those interviewed and saw their financial position as temporary and unsustainable in the long term:

"It's literally a stop gap job while I look for a better job",

"My quality of life is really not what it should be. I have to make tremendous sacrifices and constant compromises to keep my head above water...It's a less than ideal job, but it's better than no job".

A wide range of expenditures were cited when the employees were asked about their largest personal monthly expenses following housing costs; these included food, childcare, loan and credit card repayments, insurance, funeral costs for family members, study materials, and putting aside money for savings. Only a few individuals were able to save any of their income, of which all received supplementary funds from elsewhere. Some used these savings to meet large unexpected expenses such as replacing a mobile phone or a laptop. Most of those without savings were highly concerned about facing any unexpected costs in the near future, with many having limited options to deal with these types of situations:

"If anything went wrong, I don't really know what we'd do",

"My grandfather died...and I had to fly home for the funeral. I couldn't afford the flights, so I had to get my parents to pay for it',

"We still need gas, electric and food, the only thing we would do is borrow it off our daughters and pay it back that way",

"I don't live a life whereby I socialise a lot or eat out and stuff, so it would be tight...and it would be marginal. I'm more inclined to put it on the credit card",

"I don't think there's anything further I could compromise on, I would have to ask my parents I guess",

"There's maybe one person in my family who could help us who has helped us in the past. Institutions wouldn't lend to us at this point".

When queried on the relevance of their financial income to their own physical and mental wellbeing, the majority stressed that their wages were vital. A small number of interviewees in this group viewed their wages as a way of providing themselves with a basic minimum standard of living and were unable to afford much beyond that:

'At the moment it's the minimum for a neutral state of stress, it could be improved with more money',

"For each thing that you choose to prioritise you lose something else",

"I don't really do anything else because I don't have enough money to do anything else",

"We don't eat out...I guess it's a relationship strain, because sometimes one of us just has to cook... there's no way to take the pressure off. We're both busy, we're both tired, and the kid's screaming. It creates emotional tension".

Many individuals in this group stated the central role of their wages in allowing them to go beyond this basic standard of living and to be able to enjoy life:

"It affects the food that we're allowed to buy and treats that we can have for ourselves",

"If I had less income I'd probably stay in my room, which would be quite depressing. I wouldn't be able to go out with my friends as much, I wouldn't have the money to do stuff with them",

"Me and a lot of my friends here go out and [play] bingo",

"What else makes me happy is hanging out with friends and for that you do need to have money, or you need to have some portion of a disposable income".

Small pay increases, such as those implemented by the Living Wage each year, were highly valued by individuals in this group. Many stated the various differences that wage increases had made to their lifestyles and overall wellbeing:

"Now I go out a lot more, but I also see my friends a lot more",

"I feel like I've got a bit extra that I can treat myself",

"It did make a difference, you do notice it",

"It gave us a little bit of breathing room in terms of stuff like new clothes for our kid and a toy for him every now and then... presents when birthdays come up".

4.1.2 Impact on food budgets and diet

As indicated by the Scott *et al.* study³⁴, many families and individuals in the UK are not spending enough on food to meet a healthy balanced diet as recommended by the government's Eatwell Guide (see above, 2.1). While there are no updated estimates of these dietary costs for 2019, the Minimum Income Standard (MIS) provides a similar calculation. The 2018 MIS rate for an individual to afford a healthy balanced diet is £49.29 (Table 4.1).

Table 4.1 – Suggested weekly spending on food for individuals and family members who share meals (based on prices in 2018), as set by the Minimum Income Standard 2018.

| | Suggested spending on food (£/week) |
|------------------------|--|
| Single adult | 49.29 |
| Couple | 81.59 |
| Couple with 1 child | 86.07 |
| Couple with 2 children | 105.71 |
| Couple with 3 children | 146.15 |
| Couple with 4 children | 157.42 |

When the 16 employees were questioned about how much they typically spent on food each week, responses varied widely and reflected a range of different dietary preferences; there were no identifiable trends between full-time and part-time workers. Over half were spending sufficient amounts on food to afford a fully balanced diet. Those spending below the suggested amounts were mostly individuals buying food for themselves; some were only spending slightly below the threshold, whereas others routinely budgeted less than half the recommended amount. Some of the respondents commented on the difficulty and expense associated with purchasing fresh produce for one person:

"I live on my own, so it doesn't get eaten in time... so that's a waste and a waste of money isn't it",

"I do occasionally buy fruit and vegetables from the market, which definitely does make it more affordable, but at the same time I end up with too much stuff and it goes off in the fridge and then you feel really guilty about it",

"If I had someone to share cooking and food with it would be cheaper that way".

Most of those interviewed felt satisfied with their current amount of spending on food, including several of those who were not meeting the weekly suggested spending amount. When queried about the composition of their diets, some of those spending less than the recommended amount described their diets as heavily dominated by cheaper carbohydrates, such as bread and pasta, and only eating small amounts of fruits or vegetables. This seemed to be largely linked to personal preference rather than being a specific cost-cutting measure. Others reported

³⁴ Scott *et al.* 2018.

comfortably managing on less than the recommended amount, but they were still very conscious of maintaining a healthy diet, choosing cheaper alternatives where possible:

"I don't go hungry and I feel like I can eat quite a balanced diet...At the moment I'd buy chicken and I've got a slow cooker, so I can put like quite cheap cuts in and it tastes really nice",

"I always try and shop for a bargain. I'm quite savvy that I can do the best of everything!",

"I still want to focus on the fact that I need fruit and veg, but it makes more sense to have the freezer stuff".

Less than a third of those interviewed were dissatisfied with the amount they were spending on food each week. Some were not able to spend as much as they would like on food due to overall financial pressures, with fresh food often mentioned as being particularly expensive. Others felt that they were spending too much money on food, which left them with limited funds to cover other expenses. In some cases, this was identified as a result of eating large amounts of convenience foods, such as ready meals or takeaways, due to a lack of time, effort or skill:

"I was so non-functional that I was buying those takeaway things from the supermarket, microwave meals...I'm sure I could probably reduce it a bit if I actually could cook better",

"I think if I were to take the time to buy ingredients to make food and make sure that I pack my lunch every day, I could definitely spend less".

Some of those interviewed believed that it was particularly expensive and/or time consuming to follow a healthy diet:

"It could be a little less, but we're both on a healthy eating plan...The government are on about the sugar tax and they want you to eat sensibly, but they don't reduce the food that we have to eat to maintain healthy eating. We could be in a position to grow our own, we do have a garden, but who's got time for that?",

"It's easier to go to McDonalds and buy a cheeseburger for £1 than make a proper healthy meal at home".

Several individuals commented on the greater expense associated with shopping at local convenience stores, as well as their poorer quality of produce:

"I don't have access to a big supermarket, unless I get on the bus to go somewhere...and I don't have time to do that...so I end up buying lots of convenience food from Tesco's because it's just right there and it's not a particularly good shop",

"We've got plenty of shops in Oxford but sometimes they are too expensive for what people are on",

“With fruit and vegetables as well... from supermarkets, it’s not always particularly that fresh which is kind of off-putting”,

“Vegetables aren’t expensive, you can get them really cheap, it’s just that in the village I come from it’s hard to find fresh vegetables, so you have to pay a little bit more from Tesco”.

Experience of difficulties related to food

A key aim of the study was to investigate levels of household food security for Oxford workers paid the Living Wage. While the majority of those interviewed were happy with the amount that they were able to spend on food, when questioned further several respondents were able to recall recent situations where they experienced difficulties related to food. In Hansford and Friedman’s 2015 study³⁵ of different neighbourhoods in Oxford, a set of ‘Criteria for food poverty classification’ was used to assess experiences of food access from interviews (Box 1). Using these same criteria to analyse the responses in this study, around two thirds of the employees (both full-time and part-time) were identified as experiencing some form of food poverty. The issues recognised in this sample were in general much less severe than those identified in the 2015 study, principally relating to the occasional reduction of food budgets, which therefore compromised dietary quality or variety (second criterion):

“We’ve been in a position before where we have just had to go to the shop and buy the very basic items, as in basic beans... but we were never starved”,

“I lived on sandwiches for a couple of weeks. That was when my mom was like, right you’re getting sick all the time, that’s why we’re going to give you £30 for food a week”,

“I have to make compromises with food. I have to choose between vegetables or new socks”.

A quarter of the sample had experienced more severe forms of food poverty, where they had reduced or intentionally skipped meals in order to save money and pay for another expense. For most, this was occasional, but for one individual in their early thirties this was a more frequent occurrence:

“It gets to the point where if I don’t have much money then I know I can fast. I do fasting as it’s good for your metabolism, so I’ll do like a five on two off week if I’m really short on money”,

‘I think like, pay day is approaching, I’ve got half a loaf and I might need to do packed lunches for my son or for my partner, and I think, I don’t really need it, so that’s fine, and I can kind of go without’,

³⁵ F. Hansford and R. Friedman, 2015. *Food Poverty in Oxford: A Qualitative Study in Barton and Rose Hill With Recommendations for Good Food Oxford*. Oxford: Good Food Oxford.

“Yes, I have skipped meals in the past...just to save money, especially if I’ve been caught short out when I’m out and about, instead of going and buying food I’ll just wait until I get home and then eat then”,

“Skipping meals is a frequent occurrence for me”.

Box 1 – Criteria for food poverty classification

1. Sometimes worries about running out of food
2. Sometimes compromises on dietary quality or variety (goes without non-luxury foods, diet appears to lack sufficient healthy and nutritious food, dietary diversity is limited)
3. Eating is sometimes disorganised or chaotic (snacking only rather than eating cooked meals, not knowing where the next meal will come from)
4. Quantity of food consumed is sometimes reduced, skipping meals
5. Sometimes runs out of food

Adapted from United Nations Food and Agriculture Organisation’s Voices of the Hungry Food Insecurity Experience Scale: <http://www.fao.org/economic/ess/ess-fs/voices/en/>

4.1.3 Impact on satisfaction and motivation at work

In addition to food and financial security, the employee interviews explored relationships between the Living Wage and job satisfaction. When queried about the most important factor when choosing a workplace, the most common answer related to having a good working environment, with wage coming second, and career relevance third. Other factors cited included company ethics and convenience (i.e. location, hours) for managing alongside other responsibilities. When asked about what they valued most about their current job role, many mentioned the significance of good working relationships, flexible hours and other benefits. It became clear within this sample that while financial income was deemed essential to general wellbeing (see above, 4.1.1), rate of pay was only one factor to consider for employee satisfaction and wellbeing in the workplace:

“I’m not chasing money, I’m just chasing to be happy in my job”,

“It’s a really privilege to be able to work in a space where so many aspects of what I care about come together”,

“I wouldn’t work in a place where I wasn’t happy”.

The employees were asked to reflect on their current rate of pay and whether they considered it be fair for their type of work and their amount of relevant experience. The majority of the

sample agreed that their current rate of pay was commensurate to their current level of work. Common reasons related to being fairly new to the role, or having only limited responsibilities:

"I think I'm being paid the right amount for learning and training. You can't just come in expecting a high wage",

"It probably is fair to be honest for what is expected of me",

"I could see how if I was entering my second and third year, I would be interested in getting a raise",

"In terms of workload and responsibility, in comparison it's much easier for me to be doing this. I actually feel like I'm acknowledged and valued".

Others praised additional work benefits that they received, which supplemented their rate of pay:

"All the extras we get with it as well, you don't get that everywhere. When I got that first bonus, I thought oh wow!",

"I don't spend on food that much... I'm working in the café so we're having lunch here and breakfast".

Some of those who were dissatisfied with their rate of pay believed that they were regularly offering more than others in their current role:

"I have many years of experience in the field. I'm interested in exploring ways in which the salary could be commensurate with what we do",

"It's suitable to the role, but the role as it is written in the job description. There's a mismatch between what's said to be the job and what actually is the job",

"Sometimes I do disagree on that because I do work hard, but I do see people who aren't pulling their weight".

One person disagreed with their hourly rate in principle, referencing the high living costs of the city:

"I don't think it's a question of not being commensurate with the responsibility, I just think that in principle it is not enough. Nobody should have to earn this little".

Regardless of views on their own salary, almost all of the interviewees were generally very positive that their employers paid all their staff at least the Real Living Wage. Some of the respondents highlighted the necessity of these higher minimum wages for people working in Oxford:

"It's good that they are doing that, but also it's totally necessary. Oxford is such an expensive city to live in, just rent-wise it pretty much is like London",

"I mean it's a step in the right direction, but there are many steps yet to be taken. It's still nowhere near enough",

"I think it would be great if they looked at the Oxford Living Wage, because we've had a lot of conversations about the fact that Oxford is as expensive as London".

Each of the employees was questioned about the relevance of their financial income to their levels of motivation at work. For some, wage was seen to be highly relevant for how they approached their work each day:

"I feel quite lucky to get the wage that I do. Why would I not want to give it my all if I'm being paid my worth for something",

"Actually yeah, I'd say that it does provide motivation throughout the day",

"Sometimes I resign myself to the job description and just do the bare minimum, because I feel a bit annoyed that I'm not getting more".

Those who did not think their wage particularly related to their levels of workplace motivation stated the importance of other factors:

"No, because I'm motivated to do this because it's genuinely what I'm interested in and it's something that I want to pursue",

"It's not something that I have really thought about, not with that role... because it's not a long-term plan. It's literally a stop gap job while I look for a better job",

"No, because I like doing what I'm doing".

4.2 Employer perspectives on implementing the Living Wage

The interviews with the nine employers explored the organisational motivations behind becoming an accredited Living Wage Employer, as well as highlighting any perceived benefits since its implementation. The length of time since accreditation varied across the sample, with some holding Living Wage Employer status since the Living Wage Foundation was established, while others had only become accredited in the last year. Some organisations used the accreditation to formally recognise and celebrate wages that they were already paying, whereas others used the accreditation process to prompt a pay review. Following accreditation, many of the organisations communicated their new Living Wage Employer status with all staff members through team meetings and briefings.

4.2.1 Motivations for paying the Living Wage

When queried about the main motivations for becoming a Living Wage Employer most of the organisations believed that it was the right thing to do for their staff, with many referencing the especially high living costs of the city. This ethical stance was particularly emphasised by organisations in the third sector, with fair pay central to their charity ethos:

“We’re very conscious of keeping that gap between the highest earner and the lowest earner at a reasonable level”,

“If you’re working to achieve a better world, or a more socially just world, I think that has to start with how you treat people, like your employees”,

“It wants to treat those people it employs... fairly and reasonably and give them as good a deal as they can”.

For some of the organisations, a further instigator was the perceived benefits that becoming a Living Wage Employer may have upon their business image, helping to distinguish themselves within an increasingly competitive market:

“We are interested in having a profile as a business as being ethical and green”,

“It was 70% a commercial decision, to help us differentiate in a crowded marketplace”.

In a small number of cases, it emerged that the Living Wage was implemented after being raised and pushed for by internal staff members from different levels of the organisation. This highlighted how Living Wage campaigns benefit from a bottom-up approach in some sectors:

“We had committee meetings and spoke about this idea. Thankfully everyone within the business was really welcoming of it, so we didn’t get any opposition which was great”,

“I think there was interest from staff, not necessarily staff that would be affected by it, but there was interest from staff from all areas for introducing it”.

4.2.2 Positive impacts of the Living Wage for organisations

When asked to reflect upon paying a Living Wage, a range of benefits were identified by the nine employers. Many believed that the Living Wage was a unique selling point for their organisation that was a useful tool for staff recruitment, enabling them to attract greater numbers of high calibre applicants. This was also identified as having major implications for the improvement of productivity levels within the workplace:

“I think those with the Living Wage benefit and stand out more”,

“We’re getting a better quality of applicant...That has been a big thing for us, being able to attract people that are not just school leavers”,

“You attract more qualified people in the first instance...Problems are solved more quickly...they bring new ideas to the business, different ways of doing things”.

The clear standpoint and positive publicity accompanying Living Wage accreditation was also recognised as a major benefit. This external verification was valued in terms of becoming part of a wider social movement, enabling a particular ethos to be clearly communicated within publicity materials. In some instances, organisations were able to demonstrate direct links between their accreditation and securing additional business or support:

“Certainly reputationally, it’s nice to be able to put that badge on emails and other publicity that we produce. It gives people an indication of where... [the organisation] is coming from, both in terms of how it treats people but also how it wants to be seen in society at large”,

“You start winning contracts and you are in the running for contracts for non-government organisations who have a social conscience”.

While sometimes difficult to demonstrate, several of the employers believed that paying a Living Wage had a positive impact on staff retention within their organisation. This was related to the long-term sustainability of incomes, which was deemed essential for people to be able to continue to live in such an expensive city. It was also thought to provide a way to help staff feel valued within their roles, and important members of their organisations:

“We’ve noticed a higher level of staff staying for longer. Oxford rents are so expensive...[in the past] we had a lot of people who just couldn’t work for the company for too long, but now we’ve had people stay with the company for a lot longer”,

“They are hugely incentivised to stay. It means a lot to them that we pay them well and that they feel valued as a member of staff... and not taken for granted within the organisation”,

“I think it is attractive, I think people do stay with us longer, but I haven’t asked the question, so I haven’t got the actual evidence to prove that”,

"I think it gives staff the reassurance that we're willing to invest in them and give them a fair wage".

When queried about staff motivation and wellbeing, many of the organisations felt that these aspects were very difficult to measure and quantify, particularly when trying to isolate the impacts of the Living Wage. Nevertheless, a small number of organisations were able to recall specific examples where staff behaviour could be related to higher pay. The examples related to reduced staff sickness, a better work-life balance, and general improvements in job satisfaction, which all have important implications for workplace productivity:

"I think a lot of our [staff] have had horrible jobs in the past...and actually to come here and have a job that pays well that has a sense of community that values them just means they are motivated to do their job. They're actually like, I enjoy doing my job, why would I not want to do it well",

"When people have two part-time jobs, which a lot of our people do, the one that pays more is often the one that is prioritised",

"Previously before the Living Wage people would tend to get run down and burnt out...sometimes working two jobs to pay their rent...Now on the Living Wage almost everyone in our team just has this as their one job, so people are able to have that work-life balance",

"There's been a lot of comments about what a nicer life they're able to live with the extra bit of income that working here provides...It's made a huge difference to their quality of life".

However, some of the organisations also stressed the critical importance of providing a good working environment for staff, believing this to be as central to maintaining good staff motivation, wellbeing and retention as fair pay. This was particularly highlighted within the interviews with the third sector, where other social factors were recognised to be the main drivers behind employee satisfaction and loyalty:

"To be fair, I think most people are quite motivated because they like working with us. There's something about the friendliness and ethos of the company that is the driving force...We're not in an industry where people are in it to make money",

"They value the place and they value their part in it beyond what they are getting paid",

"If you are an organisation that values your staff as a part of the organisation rather than as a piece of your capital, rather than as a tool to be used...you see them as a valid part of the structure and a part of the management...Being valued as an equal while a member of a staff is important".

In addition to aiming to provide a good working environment, a number of organisations offered company benefits or rewards for their staff members, some of these having significant monetary

value. These were deemed to play an important role in keeping staff members satisfied, both in their workplace and in their home lives:

"It's not just the hourly rate that we offer, we've got a lot of other benefits, probably more so than other areas, like free meals, bus discounts, access to leisure facilities. All those benefits aren't actually included in the Living Wage calculations",

"We have a meditation evening some nights...When you enjoy work it makes so much difference",

"We order fruit every Monday and it gets piled up here and just we encourage everyone to take. They can come and eat fruit and get a quick energy boost that's healthy and keeps them going. I can get more energy out of them".

4.2.3 Recommendations for wider accreditation in Oxford

When queried about how more organisations in Oxford might be encouraged to become accredited, general communication and networking between organisations was thought to be particularly important. However, only a small number of the organisations were actively involved with Living Wage campaigns. This was largely due to overall time pressures and workloads within their organisations, particularly within the smaller companies. Some emphasised the need for financial incentives to encourage more private sector businesses in Oxford to pay their staff the Living Wage:

"There has got to be some incentivisation. I think that the best way to get the wider adoption of the Living Wage is to offset the costs that businesses will need to shoulder, by way of either corporation tax reduction or business rates reduction, certainly in the short-term".

Others suggested that local authorities played an important role in promoting the Living Wage, and that they could do more to engage with local businesses. This was particularly the case when considering the Oxford Living Wage, with some organisations unaware of this local rate when interviewed:

"The City Council have not communicated with us as a Living Wage Employer in any way [that] you should be paying the Oxford Living Wage",

"I didn't even know that this existed...It would be a leap for me to consider going there...If Oxford City Council is trying to promote this, then I would say the onus is on them to help us",

"I don't know enough about the Oxford Living Wage in all fairness".

When the employers were questioned on their personal views, some highlighted additional recommendations to help protect low income workers in Oxford. It was thought that guaranteeing the security and regularity of employment was particularly important for

reducing poverty in the city and should perhaps be incorporated within the Living Wage accreditation processes. The necessity of the Oxford Living Wage was also emphasised, with some of the employers calling for this to be more widely promoted:

“It’s all well and good being paid £9.79 an hour, but if you don’t know if you’re going to get an hour’s work in a week, that’s not enough... Regularity of income is a huge issue”,

“Businesses definitely do need to wake up to the fact that we need an Oxford Living Wage. Perhaps there is something more that the council could do in terms of the validating of businesses that do pay Oxford Living Wage and enshrining them”,

“I think the minimum wage should be higher, because I think that people who earn the minimum wage are subsidised by the tax payer anyway... if we can just recognise the value of work”.

The employers were also questioned about whether they, as an individual, believed that a full-time Real Living Wage was enough for people living in Oxford. Even after considering the pay increase that the Real Living Wage provides staff when compared to the minimum rates, the majority thought that the current rate was still insufficient in the context of Oxford, often citing the high costs of housing locally as a primary factor:

“I think it’s a necessity and I don’t think that it’s a luxury...I think that it’s the baseline of what we should do as an employer”,

“You can survive, and you can live, but you can’t thrive”.

4.3 Continuing challenges for low income workers in Oxford

The employee and employer interviews emphasised a series of challenges experienced by many living and working in Oxford, having significant ramifications for wellbeing of employees and related workplace productivity. Such problems persist even when in receipt of the Living Wage; therefore further steps are required to fully address instances of in-work poverty in Oxford.

4.3.1 Housing costs in Oxford

When asked directly about the challenges for low-income workers in Oxford, all nine employers ranked the high costs associated with accommodation as the leading concern for those in the city. In the context of the workplace, this was highlighted as a major problem for staff retention in lower paid roles, with low pay rates largely unsustainable for being able to live locally. Though not asked directly, many of the employees also commented on how high rents were a particular strain on their finances, which also appeared to intensify over time. With limited security of tenure, typically lasting only 12 months, many believed that their wage increases were insufficient to keep up with yearly rental increases:

“Having lived in the same house for three years, the amount our rent has gone up on a yearly basis is just frightening”.

Despite the high costs, many also commented on the poor quality of local housing and its negative impact upon their wellbeing. Some of those interviewed rented small rooms within shared properties, leaving them with very limited personal space. To save money, others continued to live with parents or with other relatives, despite preferring to live independently:

“I live in a tiny house with two other people... and I live in a cupboard virtually it feels like sometimes, and my rent is just it’s my whole salary... there’s nothing left over”,

“You need your own space, when you are with your family it can be difficult to live with them”,

“A lack of space turns ordinary everyday things that you shouldn’t have to think twice about into major hassles, like doing my laundry or using the kitchen, or having enough space in the fridge, things like that are really big problems for me”.

With a limited ability to save money, many were far from being able to buy their own properties. Some of the employers expressed the difficulties of getting onto the property market themselves, even while on much higher salaries in their senior management roles. To achieve a more stable home life, many are forced to move outside of the city centre and to commute to work.

Addressing Oxford’s affordable housing crisis in an environmentally sustainable manner is beyond the scope of this report, but much excellent work is being done by campaigning organisations within Oxford, such as the Oxford Fairer Housing Network.

4.3.2 Transport

While it was not fully reflected by the employees interviewed in this sample, several of the employers commented on how a large proportion of their staff travelled into work from outside Oxford. This was explained as a way to avoid the high costs of housing in the city centre, but which also incurs significant financial and time costs (not to mention environmental impacts), with the free time of employees minimised through increasingly long commutes. The cost of travel was identified to be particularly problematic for part-time workers, who pay the same financial costs despite working fewer hours each day. Schemes and incentives for active transport and car-sharing, alongside travel-related discounts for public transport offered as workplace benefits, are therefore highly beneficial for low-income workers and play an important role alongside the Living Wage rates.

4.3.3 Financial insecurity

As particularly highlighted by the employee interviews, there are a range of circumstances that mean that even workers receiving the Oxford Living Wage may be left with minimal disposable income once housing costs are covered. Many of the employees were unable to save regularly, particularly part-time workers, leaving them vulnerable to unexpected increases in monthly outgoings. Even those who were able to save did so in small amounts, and in some instances, these were used up fairly quickly. While some of the employees saw these low-paid roles as temporary, others had been in similar roles for several years and were highly concerned for their future:

“I could do with more savings, I should save more and start paying into a pension really...I try to, small amounts, bits and pieces, but then when your washing machine blows up that’s kind of gone isn’t it”,

“At the moment we’re on a roll, so we can eat, and we can do things like that, but my worry is when we get to pensioners and the children have left home, how would we cope then?”.

Employer schemes such as interest-free loans can alleviate the pressure for employees in these circumstances. Employers can also equip themselves to ensure employees know about advice services they can access, and state benefits and statutory support they are entitled to, such as Free School Meals and Healthy Start Vouchers if they have children.

5. Conclusion and final recommendations

This series of local interviews combined with an Oxford-based assessment of the Minimum Income Standard clearly demonstrates that even when workers are in receipt of the Real Living Wage, there are employees in Oxford who continue to be financially insecure, with some heavily reliant on others to maintain an acceptable standard of living. Furthermore, it was revealed that some individuals on the Living Wage are at serious risk of food poverty during periods of financial strain. In this small sample, impacts upon household food security could be principally recognised as the reduction of dietary quality and the reduction of food consumed (i.e. skipping meals) to save money. In some cases, these strategies were routinely practiced to cope with stretched finances. With the cost of housing significantly underestimated in Living Wage calculations, it is understandable why it may be difficult to attain a healthy balanced diet while earning the Real Living Wage in Oxford.

While the findings of this small study cannot be extrapolated across the wider Oxford population, personal accounts identified part-time workers as a group at particular risk of in-work poverty. Many of the part-time workers interviewed were unable to save money and struggled to cope with increases in monthly outgoings. Several admitted that they would need to borrow money, either from family members or from institutions (i.e. loans, credit cards), to meet a large unexpected bill. This was often the case even when their salaries were supplemented by the shared income of a partner. Part-time workers with poor credit ratings and limited assistance from family members would be at high risk of experiencing food poverty while living in Oxford.

The Living Wage calculations only consider those in full-time employment, but there are a wide range of reasons why people are required to work part-time. This sample identified several people who had caring responsibilities, as well as others concluding studying or training opportunities. Some of those interviewed indicated that their food budget would be stretched when money was needed elsewhere.

Even individuals working full-time on the Real Living Wage were seen to be exposed to food related issues while living in Oxford. Some of those interviewed were in receipt of subsidised housing costs (i.e. social housing, living with family members), and believed this to be the primary factor behind their more secure financial situations. Furthermore, all of the full-time workers interviewed were single adults without dependents. With additional financial strains, such as childcare or loan repayments, many full-time workers renting privately in Oxford may similarly struggle to cope with unexpected costs.

When considering employee wellbeing more generally, most of the employees believed that their income was essential. It was also evident that many of those interviewed were frequently unable to afford non-essential expenditures deemed important for their wellbeing, such as social activities or the purchase of new clothes or personal items. This was further supported by assessments of the Minimum Income Standard when adapted to Oxford's housing scenario. A single person earning the Oxford Living Wage would still need to sacrifice spending on certain categories (e.g. social and cultural participation) to afford a fully-balanced diet, such as that recommended in the government's Eatwell Guide. The financial strain of those in other

circumstances is likely to be even more pronounced, demonstrated by the example of a part-time worker with a child. Even the Oxford Living Wage may be insufficient for certain situations, leaving families with limited finances to afford more than fixed essential costs (i.e. housing, bills) and basic expenditure on food. This has significant implications for levels of wellbeing in the city and therefore workplace productivity.

When the employees reflected upon job satisfaction, adequate financial compensation appropriate to the job role was deemed to be highly important for workplace motivation. From this small sample, those who appeared most satisfied while earning the Real Living Wage were employed within training roles or were relatively new to the workplace in general. It was also clear that a good working environment was just as critical for job satisfaction. Many of the employers appreciated the relationship between good levels of wellbeing and workplace productivity, with some investing in additional schemes and benefits for their staff members.

The interviews with the employers indicated that there are a wide range of benefits associated with Living Wage accreditation for organisations. Some were able to directly witness improvements in staff retention and absenteeism since its introduction, relating the higher rate to employee satisfaction and better work-life balance. Others felt it was a useful recruitment tool, attracting higher qualified staff from the outset and therefore improving overall productivity levels. All of the employers interviewed were acutely aware of the many challenges experienced by their low-income employees and many believed that the Real Living Wage was the minimum acceptable standard for their staff.

5.1 Final recommendations for Oxford

The high costs of living in Oxford are evidently a financial strain for many low-income workers living and working in the city. Even the employers interviewed in higher-paid management roles commented on the unaffordability of the city, with housing costs at the forefront. While the introduction of the Real Living Wage has been demonstrated as having real benefits for employees and their respective organisations in Oxford, to fully address instances of in-work poverty the Real Living Wage should be viewed as an absolute minimum for workers in Oxford. There is a clear case for the necessity of an Oxford Living Wage, as it is the only way to take into account these unusually high housing costs.

In conclusion, this report recommends the adoption of the accredited Real Living Wage by all employers in Oxford, as a stepping stone to achieving the higher Oxford Living Wage. It is up to Oxford City Council to work with employers, both accredited and non-accredited, to lead this transition; supported by the city's campaign groups.

Appendix 1



Appendix 2 – Sociodemographic characteristics of employees

*only limited information (i.e. gender) was recorded for the employers.

| Socio-demographic characteristics | Full-time employees | Part-time employees | Employers* | All |
|--|---------------------|---------------------|--------------|-----------|
| Gender | | | | |
| Male | 3 | 3 | 5 | 11 |
| Female | 3 | 7 | 4 | 14 |
| Age group | | | | |
| 18-29 years | 5 | 3 | - | 8 |
| 30-49 years | 0 | 5 | - | 5 |
| 50-69 years | 1 | 2 | - | 3 |
| Education | | | | |
| No education | 1 | 1 | - | 2 |
| Secondary complete | 0 | 2 | - | 2 |
| Vocational training | 1 | 1 | - | 2 |
| First degree | 3 | 1 | - | 4 |
| Postgrad degree | 1 | 4 | - | 5 |
| Not reported | 0 | 1 | - | 1 |
| Country/region of origin (United Nations regional groups) | | | | |
| UK | 3 | 8 | - | 11 |
| Western Europe and Others | 1 | 1 | - | 2 |
| Eastern Europe | 1 | 0 | - | 1 |
| Africa | 1 | 0 | - | 1 |
| Latin America and Caribbean | 0 | 1 | - | 1 |
| Number of children (18 years or under living at home) | | | | |
| 0 | 6 | 5 | - | 11 |
| 1 | 0 | 2 | - | 2 |
| 2 | 0 | 2 | - | 2 |
| 3 + | 0 | 1 | - | 1 |
| | | | TOTAL | 25 |

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OXFORD CITY COUNCIL

INTERNAL AUDIT REPORT - FINAL

AUDIT 12. FUSION
MARCH 2019

| LEVEL OF ASSURANCE | |
|--------------------|---------------------------|
| Design | Operational Effectiveness |
| Moderate | Moderate |

| | |
|---|----|
| EXECUTIVE SUMMARY | 2 |
| <u>DETAILED FINDINGS</u> | 6 |
| <u>STAFF INTERVIEWED</u> | 19 |
| <u>APPENDIX I - DEFINITIONS</u> | 20 |
| <u>APPENDIX II - TERMS OF REFERENCE</u> | 21 |

| DISTRIBUTION | |
|--------------|---------------------------------|
| Name | Job Title |
| Ian Brooke | Head of Service |
| Lucy Cherry | Leisure and Performance Manager |
| | |

| REPORT STATUS LIST | |
|-----------------------|--|
| Auditors: | Tiyese Namwinga and Gurpreet Dulay |
| Dates work performed: | August to December 2018 Extended time to attend customer panels and also conduct additional testing with Fusion |
| Draft report issued: | December 2018 |
| Final report issued: | March 2019 |

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

LEVEL OF ASSURANCE: (SEE APPENDIX I FOR DEFINITIONS)

| | | |
|---------------|----------|--|
| Design | Moderate | Generally a sound system of internal control designed to achieve system objectives with some exceptions. |
| Effectiveness | Moderate | Evidence of non compliance with some controls, that may put some of the system objectives at risk |

SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS: (SEE APPENDIX I FOR DEFINITIONS)

| | |
|--------|---|
| High | 0 |
| Medium | 3 |
| Low | 5 |

TOTAL NUMBER OF RECOMMENDATIONS: 8

CRR REFERENCE:

Strong and Active Communities

BACKGROUND:

The Council have contracted Fusion to operate and manage five centres the Council own. To manage this contract the following meetings are in place:

- Daily operational contact as appropriate (i.e. email or telephone)
- Weekly operational Teleconference meetings
- Monthly Client Performance Meeting
- Quarterly Leisure Partnership Board
- Quarterly Senior Stakeholder Meetings.

The Council have Leisure and Performance Manager in place whose role includes monitoring delivery of the contract performance against agreed KPIs and through the mechanisms above. If the contractor is not meeting performance standards then they can attract financial penalties through a points based system. Fusion sets out an Annual Service Plan which details their aims and objectives in respect of the delivery of leisure services on behalf of Oxford City Council in the year.

We carried out a review of the Fusion Partnership in 2017/18 and concluded moderate assurance over both the design and effectiveness of the controls in place, raising three medium recommendations to improve the control environment. A re-audit of the Fusion partnership arrangements has been included in the 2018/19 plan, however this time focussing on arrangements to meet customers' expectations and engaging with them and how provider resilience is assessed.

Context

It should be set out that there are differences between the centres in of Oxford; it is found easier to engage with customers in certain centres but harder in others and this shows in the engagement in customer forums as there are more volunteers. For example, there is very good User Group Representative for Ferry Leisure Centre who regularly attend and constructively contribute to Leisure Partnership Board meetings. Additionally they positively engage with the Fusion team and Leisure & Performance Manager outside of the Board meeting. Recent examples include a site meeting with L&P Manager and the new GM; User group feedback and concern on proposals for Childcare provision at FLC. This has shown better engagement in Hinksey and Leys with meet the manager sessions operating well. The other wider context to take into account is that overall customer satisfaction identified through surveys shows a monthly average score in March 2016 of 75.6% and in September 2018 it was 86.4%.

The market that is operated in is also difficult in terms of competition of other providers. Providers have greater freedoms and fewer restrictions on pricing or approval of changes to pricing which can make it harder to adapt react to competitive challenges.

There are also stronger discussions at a senior level between the Council and Fusion with the Council Head of Service and Fusion Chief Executive meeting quarterly to discuss market challenges and customer satisfaction. The market challenge discussions include threats and opportunities and how the centres can best respond to them along with areas of service delivery that need to be improved. On an operational level Fusion have a weekly operational meeting with the Council to discuss progress on formal performance meetings which are held monthly.

In terms of this review, the report was initially issued in December 2018 and between January and February 2019, Fusion quickly engaged with assessing the findings and taking action and their progress is set out in the management responses to findings. This engagement is welcomed and shows the importance placed by them on continuous improvement. It should be noted however that these improvements help improve our view on the design of controls. The effectiveness of controls however at this point cannot be judged until these new arrangements have bedded in and we have an opportunity to then assess them.

GOOD PRACTICE:

We have identified the following areas of good practice from the review:

- Reporting from Fusion to the Council is sound in that it happens regularly and in agreed formats in a timely manner. This includes information on customer complaints and compliments and the outcomes of surveys with high level actions on how further improvement can be made
- Customer representatives from each facility are invited and some do attend the Leisure Partnership Board meetings.
- Other key stakeholders invited to Leisure Partnership Board meetings include the Board & Shadow Executive Board members for Leisure; Older people and Young People representatives; Representation from Oxfordshire Clinical Commissioning Group.
- The central customer complaint process via Market Force operates well with responses identified and acted upon largely in a timely and sympathetic manner.

Data Validation

During the review we were requested to undertake an additional review of the data reported from Fusion to the Council on customer footfall figures. To validate data we selected a number of reported data-sets from Fusion across September and October 2018 from monthly reports issued to the Council and asked to see source information. We also discussed how Fusion applies assumptions to data when recording statistics. We found:

- Fusion was able to provide source data which validated 100% of the information we selected
- Fusion was able to discuss and provide logical reasons for the assumptions applied.

Therefore this is identified as good practice and no findings are raised on this area.

KEY FINDINGS:

However we also identified the following areas where controls could be strengthened:

- Customer forums at sites do not operate as effectively as they should. This has been caused in-part by changes in Fusion staff resulting in meetings being cancelled, low attendance and minutes/agendas not being issued on a timely basis (Medium)
- Not all channels for where complaints can be made - i.e. on social media, via telephone or face-to-face - are recorded on Market Force and are not formally reported to the Council (Medium)
- Text message alert services and commitments to call back customers within 24 hours who have signed up to find out more about a service were demonstrated not to be working effectively as contact was not made following requests made (Medium)
- When reviewing each social media page and website for each location we found inconsistencies in customer information which were displayed on some sites and not others e.g. signposting to the App (Low)
- Via the Fusion App we identified outdated promotions being advertised which should have been removed (Low)
- From site visits undertaken with site managers we agreed on areas that require improvement i.e. limited number of lockers or some which are an inappropriate size at some sites and cluttered/unclean areas which need to be rectified (Low)
- When using the Fusion App and signing up for alerts we found the functionality to add unnecessary additional time in completing it due to pop-ups prohibiting certain preferences to be selected (Low)
- We raised a fake complaint to each site and for 1 site we found that the complaint was not acknowledged with a 'thank you' or an expression of being 'sorry for the experience you faced' which the other 4 complaints did (Low).

It should be noted that during the review we were alerted that the Council had raised concerns with Fusion over the participation data they report to the Council each month - this was also raised at the Council Scrutiny Committee. We were asked to review the source data which Fusion hold on their Gladstone MRM Plus 2 - leisure management software, which is where participation information is held. It is understood that this data creates extracts and then via manual adjustments where required, it is reported to the Council in monthly performance packs. To produce the participation data a series of assumptions are used by Fusion which is acceptable e.g. if a 5x5 football pitch is booked it is assumed this counts as

10 participants even if only 8 turn up. This methodology is standard industry practice.

We selected our sample and met with Fusion and concluded the data was accurate and complete for the items tested.

ADDED VALUE

We raised fake complaints, attended each site, and interviewed all customer representatives who represent each site, reviewed all social media platforms and tested the push-text functionality of Fusion systems. These allowed us to see the customer perspective.

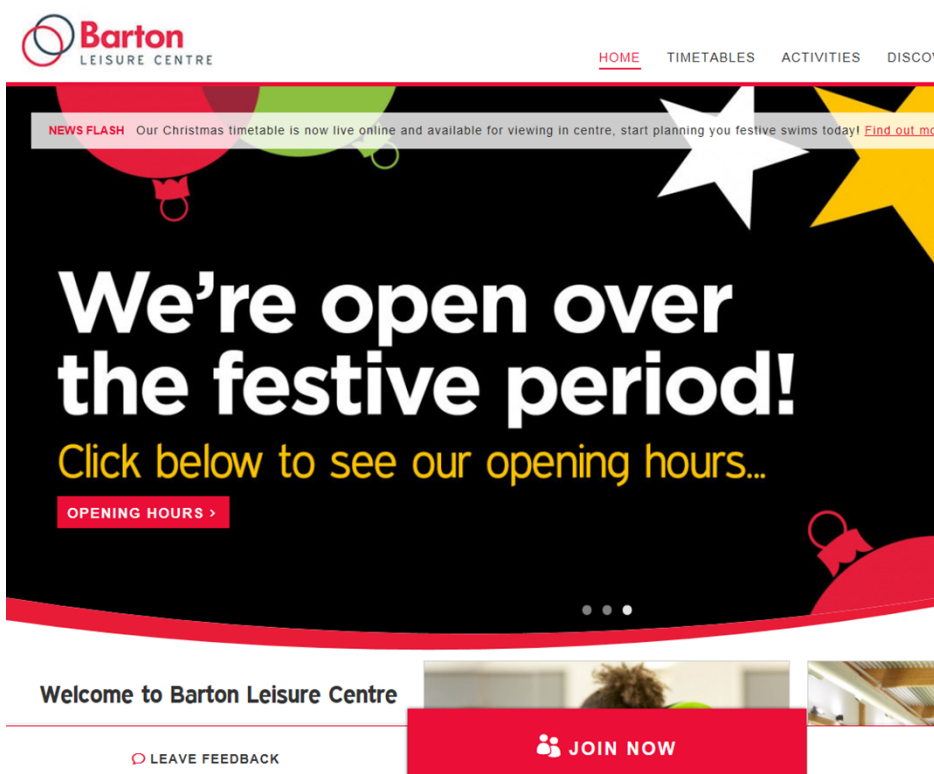
CONCLUSION:

Overall we have raised 3 medium and 5 low findings. This review was focussed on the customer perspective and our review found that Fusion have a moderately designed control environment in that there is a central complaints platform via Market Force, customer forum arrangements in each site and various platforms to promote and engage with customers across Apps and social media.

We have concluded the effectiveness of these controls is also moderate. There are areas for improvement with customer forums which are a key place where customers can express their views which have suffered low attendance, cancellations and the administration of the meetings (minutes/agendas) are not always effectively managed; it should be noted progress has been made after the report was issued identifying improvements in meet the manager sessions. There are also improvements required in that not all complaint forums including social media and telephone are identified and reported to the Council - however these will account for a small number of complaints but this could be better managed for completeness. However when we look at the overall picture monthly average survey scores improved from March 2016 at 75.6% to 86.4% in September 2018 which supports a moderate opinion.

DETAILED FINDINGS

RISK: ENGAGEMENT WITH CUSTOMERS TO EXTRACT MEANINGFUL INFORMATION TO DEVELOP AND DELIVER SERVICES IS INEFFECTIVE

| Ref | Significance | Finding |
|-----|--------------|---|
| L | | <p>Fake complaints</p> <p>Customer complaints are formally recorded via each location's website. A customer clicks the 'leave feedback' button which is on the bottom left of every page and therefore is very visible and easily accessible. From here a new website window opens where a customer can raise their complaint. The feedback form is hosted by Market Force who filter the information to the relevant Fusion site managers.</p>  <p>The screenshot shows the Barton Leisure Centre website. At the top, there's a navigation bar with 'HOME', 'TIMETABLES', 'ACTIVITIES', and 'DISCOV'. Below this is a 'NEWS FLASH' banner about the Christmas timetable. The main content area features a large black banner with white text saying 'We're open over the festive period!' and yellow text saying 'Click below to see our opening hours...'. There's a red button labeled 'OPENING HOURS >'. Below the banner, there's a 'Welcome to Barton Leisure Centre' section with a 'LEAVE FEEDBACK' link and a prominent red 'JOIN NOW' button.</p> <p>As part of the review we raised a 'fake' complaint for each of the sites with different types of complaints raised e.g. unhappy with increased charges, customer service or cancelled sessions. The aim of this test was to check whether the process worked i.e. complaints went to site managers and site managers provided responses. We also assessed the timeliness and adequacy of the responses.</p> <p>The testing showed that all five responses were received for all sites with four being within the 72 hour timeframe and the other responding in 120 hours (Leys Pools and Leisure Centre).</p> <p>The testing also showed an adequate response to each complaint by either rectifying the concern, giving evidenced based reasons to justify prices or sign posting on where further information can be found. We also assessed the tone of the responses judging if it made us feel as a customer, valued and responded to sympathetically. For four out of the five complaints, the response included a form of words effectively saying 'sorry' and thanking the customer for giving their feedback. It is widely accepted</p> |

that when dealing with complaints saying sorry does not mean an acceptance of culpability but is a useful tool to help avoid any further animosity with the complainant; this is often done by saying sorry 'for the experience' the customer felt.

In one case (Leys Pool and Leisure Centre), no apology or similar words was used and no words were used to say thank you to the complainant for raising their concern. Therefore there is room to improve here by setting out these standards to all those who respond to customer complaints as the risk is that without following these standards, Fusion could unnecessarily cause further customer distress.

RECOMMENDATION:

- A. Fusion to communicate via email the outcome of this finding to all Site Managers setting out protocols on responding to complaints. This instruction should set out the requirements to say 'sorry' in responses or thanking complainants for their response in all responses to complaints. The Council should oversee that Fusion do this.

MANAGEMENT RESPONSE:

- A. Agreed. We will inform Fusion of this requirement and work with them around setting out the email to instruct Site Managers and all individuals who may respond to complaints

Responsible Officer: Lucy Cherry

Implementation Date: February 2019

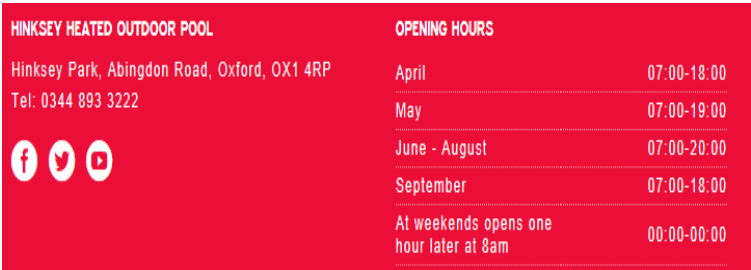
RISK: THERE ARE NOT SUFFICIENT ARRANGEMENTS TO ENGAGE WITH CUSTOMERS BASED ON HOW THEY WANT TO BE INTERACTED WITH

| Ref | Significance | Finding |
|-----|--------------|---------|
|-----|--------------|---------|

L

Website and social media (Facebook/Twitter) review

Each Fusion site has a website; these are often the platform customers first visit to inform them of the services offered to inform their customer journey. We reviewed each site as if we were a customer and found that overall the websites were professionally designed, well presented, accessible and easy to use. There were however, some areas for improvement to better enhance the customer digital experience:

| Website | Areas for improvement |
|------------------------------|---|
| Barton Leisure Centre | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> No mention of mobile app on site and social media Some links on Facebook pages are expired Sentences overlapping on Facebook page No booking tab on Facebook page |
| Ferry Leisure Centre | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> No mention of mobile app on site and social media Some links on Facebook page are expired No opening times or book button on Facebook page Local site activities page profile picture is of poor quality (blurred) No link to go back to home page on the Pay as You Go/ Sign Up for Membership page |
| Hinksey Heated Outdoor Pool | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> No mention of mobile app on site and social media Some links on Facebook page are expired No opening times on Facebook page No link to go back to home page on the Pay as You Go/ Sign Up for Membership page Weekend full opening hours unclear - see image below  |
| Leys Pool and Leisure Centre | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> No mention of mobile app on site and social media Facebook page link is expired |
| Oxford Ice Rink | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> No mention of mobile app on site and social media Membership option pages not working Some ice skating activity tickets have no call to action button Some links on Facebook & Twitter pages are expired Sentences overlapping on Facebook page No opening hours on Facebook |

RECOMMENDATION:

- A. Fusion to take each point from the table in this finding and correct the customer interfaces so that all sites have a consistent standard of customer information. The Council should oversee this implementation

MANAGEMENT RESPONSE:

- A. Agreed. A key communication tool is the Fusion App which launched in 2017 - a significant drive was made via posters, emails communicated to customers and briefing staff on encouraging the use of the App. All new members also receive a welcome message promoting the App. All social media pages have been updated with the default 'Use App' button which corrects one of the points raised by Internal Audit. Further addressing the points raised, we have added two tabs to Facebook pages which allows bookings to make and the second allows the App to be downloaded.

All opening times have been updated on the website and Facebook pages. We have also implemented changes to ensure any changes to opening times are fed back to the Digital Team to allow immediate changes. There is also a process now in place to review unique links that have expired and deleted from social media so we can ensure these are still correct/valid. All links from centre sites to book or sign up have been resolved.

This now resolves the items raised by Internal Audit and we have oversight processes in place to ensure these standards are sustained.

Responsible Officer: Lucy Cherry

Implementation Date: February 2019

RISK: THERE ARE NOT SUFFICIENT ARRANGEMENTS TO ENGAGE WITH CUSTOMERS BASED ON HOW THEY WANT TO BE INTERACTED WITH

| Ref | Significance | Finding |
|-----|--------------|--|
| | M | <p><u>Call backs</u></p> <p>As part of the review we signed up to alerts for the Oxford Ice Rink site. A text message was issued to us to promote a sale. We responded per the text instructions to confirm we would want to receive a call back to know more and possibly take up the offer - see image below.</p> <div data-bbox="697 604 839 645" data-label="Text"> <p>Text Message Fri 23 Nov, 08:02</p> </div> <div data-bbox="529 665 888 844" data-label="Text"> <p>FUSION: Black Friday offer! Join Oxford Ice Rink today & get 3 months for the price of 2. Offer expires tonight! Reply YES for a call back or STOP to opt out</p> </div> <div data-bbox="697 878 839 902" data-label="Text"> <p>Fri 23 Nov, 09:14</p> </div> <div data-bbox="951 922 1005 952" data-label="Text"> <p>YES</p> </div> <p>After sending the message, we received no call or any further communication. From a customer perspective this could be very frustrating as they may not be contacted and this would impact their experience with Fusion. There is also a risk that Fusion does not make the most of their initiatives by following through text messages to secure more customers.</p> <p><u>Swim lesson call back</u></p> <p>Fusion run Swim Schools and you can sign up for a 24 hour call back to find out more about the service. We signed up for this on 20 December 2018 and did not receive any contact or call back except for the automated email.</p> <div data-bbox="504 1417 801 1442" data-label="Text"> <p>Reply Reply All Forward IM</p> </div> <div data-bbox="504 1444 727 1467" data-label="Text"> <p>Thu 20/12/2018 13:29</p> </div> <div data-bbox="504 1469 571 1509" data-label="Image"> </div> <div data-bbox="587 1469 967 1520" data-label="Text"> <p>Fusion Lifestyle <noreply@fusion-lifestyle.com> Swim School Call Back Request</p> </div> <div data-bbox="499 1525 644 1547" data-label="Text"> <p>To Gurpreet Dulay</p> </div> <div data-bbox="499 1550 761 1572" data-label="Text"> <p>Retention Policy 8 Year Delete (8 years)</p> </div> <div data-bbox="959 1550 1096 1572" data-label="Text"> <p>Expires 20/12/2026</p> </div> <div data-bbox="499 1572 1350 1617" data-label="Text"> <p>Click here to download pictures. To help protect your privacy, Outlook prevented automatic download of some pictures in this message.</p> </div> <p><u>Suggested Meetings</u></p> <p>Dear Gurpreet</p> <p>Thank you for registering your interest in our Swim School!</p> <p>A member of the team will be in contact with you within 24 hours to discuss your requirements and enrol your child on Swim School if appropriate.</p> <p>Thanks.</p> <p>The Fusion Lifestyle Team.</p> |

RECOMMENDATION:

- A. Fusion to ensure they speak with their back office/central staff to identify how these communications are issued and how responses are managed to ensure only text messages and emails go out to individuals who will be followed up

MANAGEMENT RESPONSE:

Agreed. Fusion have enhanced systems to record all of our incoming sales enquires. Fusion have reviewed this feedback and their regional customer relations manager has been into centres and completed 3 hours of retraining with teams. Fusion are currently evaluating a plan to centralise all sales enquiries to a dedicated team at a central location to ensure a smoother customer journey.

Responsible Officer: Lucy Cherry

Implementation Date: March 2019

THERE ARE NOT SUFFICIENT ARRANGEMENTS TO ENGAGE WITH CUSTOMERS BASED ON HOW THEY WANT TO BE INTERACTED WITH

| Ref | Significance | |
|-----|--------------|--|
| | M | <p><u>Customer Representative</u></p> <p>Each Fusion site has a customer representative's forum and an identified lead customer representative. As part of this review, we interviewed each site customer representative with semi-structured interviews covering their experience of how they are listened to, valued and whether their concerns are acted upon.</p> <p>From the interviews, we found that overall customer user group meetings or customer feedback surveys were in place and customers appreciated these initiatives. Customer forum meetings held were open and transparent and Fusion were willing to listen to customer feedback and were generally responsive. There were however need for improvements in the following administration of meetings, continuity of meetings, customer participation, Fusion responsiveness, social media management and communication. Specifically these discussions found:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Due to Fusion staff changes there were periods of time where sporadic customer user group meetings took place i.e. this was the case at the Ferry Leisure Centre where one meeting was held in six months • Leys Pool and Leisure Centre customer feedback surveys are not operating effectively as only one was undertaken in 2018 • All sites should agree the meeting dates for the year at the out-set to better support attendance and forward planning as this is currently not in place • Minutes post meetings are not issued timely and should be distributed in an agreed timeframe to set expectations. Also in some occasions agendas for meetings were tabled on the same day as the meeting which is too late • There is also lower than ideal levels of confidence in whether all issues raised at meetings are being actioned and followed through and an action tracker should be used for all customer forum meetings • Customer forum attendees should be asked which format they want minutes for meetings attended issue in i.e. electronic or hard copy, and then this be followed • There is regular low attendance at some customer group meetings particularly at Barton Leisure Centre and Hinksey Heated Outdoor Pool). This impacts the quality and diversity of discussions which may mean the customer voice is not effectively heard. A suggestion was to set up a drop box for comments at these centres for more customer participation given the low attendance <p>New customer user group members should receive an orientation as this currently does not happen which introduces them to the purpose of the meetings and what is expected. This may set out the differences in responsibilities of Fusion</p> |

and the Council

RECOMMENDATION:

- A. Customer forums/panel meetings dates should be set out for the year ahead and all must take place at the date expected
- B. Feedback surveys from each group should take place at set frequencies which are agreed for the year in advance
- C. Protocols should be set out for when minutes of customer forum/panel meetings are issued post a meeting - this should be no longer than two weeks after any given meeting
- D. Customer forum/panel attendees should be emailed/written to by letter to ask what format they would like minutes in. This should then be logged and agreed protocols followed
- E. A customer forum/panel member orientation pack should be developed which sets out expectations and responsibilities of attendees and issued within 1 month of a new member joining
- F. Fusion should set an action plan for each site about how to achieve greater engagement with customer forum/panels and demonstrate improvement to the Council

MANAGEMENT RESPONSE:

- A. to F - As of January 2019 member forums (meet the manager) are in place across all Fusion sites. There is an annual calendar now published. They roll on a 3 month cycle of Wednesday night, Thursday morning and Saturday morning to ensure Fusion are making times available for all users. Minutes are taken and then distributed on the 'You said, we did' board. In advance of the meeting the central marketing team advertise meetings on social media and websites. Fusion are working on all items above.

Responsible Officer: Lucy Cherry

Implementation Date: March 2019

RISK: THERE ARE NOT SUFFICIENT ARRANGEMENTS TO ENGAGE WITH CUSTOMERS BASED ON HOW THEY WANT TO BE INTERACTED WITH

| Ref | Significance | Finding |
|-----|--------------|--|
| 5 | M | <u>Not all complaint channels are being recorded</u> Customers may raise concerns or complaints with their experience through the survey on the locations website, social media pages (Facebook or Twitter), verbally to staff or in writing. Currently |

however, the only reported complaints from Fusion to the Council are those via the website. This does not report all of the customer issues effectively.

From review of the social media pages for each site, it is clear that customer concerns or complaints are not managed. We found that these pages do not effectively promote the raising of complaints on them or signposting to the formal complaint survey and more critically, responses to complaints are not consistently posted to the pages by Fusion. This means a customer who has expressed a concern or complaint is not engaged with which will further impact their experience.



From discussions with customer representatives and subsequent review of complaints it was found that face to face and telephone conversations resolved immediately were not recorded on Market Force too.

By not treating customer concerns or complaints via routes other than the respective site websites, with the same regard as those received on the respective site websites, customers concerns are not being dealt with effectively impacting their experience.

RECOMMENDATION:

- G. Fusion should identify all means by which customers can complain in addition to Market Force and analyse these sources and report them to the Council to ensure completeness in the data reported
- H. Fusion should invest in the social media platforms to either direct customer to the main complaint system or use these platforms more effectively as a complaint forum by advertising this as such

MANAGEMENT RESPONSE:

- A. Agreed. The website has been amended to provide information on and an opportunity to, easily make or escalate a complaint without involving the local management hierarchy. Information will also be displayed in foyers indicating that customer can complain or escalate direct via the website if they feel the need to do so
- B. Agreed. Fusion have sourced and are looking to implement a new system with one of our suppliers will convert social media feedback into the Fusion tracking system. This means all feedback will be recorded with daily alerts and case management to ensure Fusion are responding in good time.

Responsible Officer:

Lucy Cherry

Implementation Date:

June 2019

RISK: THERE ARE NOT SUFFICIENT ARRANGEMENTS TO ENGAGE WITH CUSTOMERS BASED ON HOW THEY WANT TO BE INTERACTED WITH

| Ref | Significance | Finding |
|-----|--------------|---|
| 6 | L | <p><u>Outdated promotion</u></p> <p>We downloaded the Fusion App and assessed the customer friendliness of this platform. The App provides contact numbers, the ability to provide feedback/complain, centre information on latest events/promotions and the ability to book sessions.</p> <p>From this review we found:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> There is an outdated promotions on the App. The below screenshot was taken on 20 December 2018. This promotes a 12 month for 10 month membership offer which expired on 30 November 2018. <p>12 FOR 10 ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP OFFER</p> <hr/> <p>All T&C's are on the website:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Our normal membership T&C's apply. Offer only on Annual Memberships Offer ends 30th November 2018 |

RECOMMENDATION:

Fusion should review all promotions on all platforms and remove any which are outdated. Fusion should also ensure their arrangements to ensure future promotions are taken down on a timely basis are sound - these arrangements should be reported to the satisfaction of the Leisure and Performance Manager

MANAGEMENT RESPONSE:

- A. Agreed. Fusion have now changed their internal process to review their terms and conditions on the website and App on a weekly basis. All terms are now held on a central page for easy viewing to avoid this in future.

Responsible Officer: Lucy Cherry

Implementation Date: April 2019

RISK: THERE ARE NOT SUFFICIENT ARRANGEMENTS TO ENGAGE WITH CUSTOMERS BASED ON HOW THEY WANT TO BE INTERACTED WITH

| Ref | Significance | Finding |
|-----|--------------|--|
| 7 | L | <p><u>Site visits</u></p> <p>We visited each site and were shown around by the site manager. We did not follow a set check list in this part of the review but took in observations from a customers perspective and discussed these with site managers. The areas where there was agreement in our collective observations and require improvement were:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hinksey Outdoor Heated Pool - First Aid Room not clean enough and cluttered • Hinksey Outdoor Heated Pool - No lockers for customers to keep their belongings • Leys Pools and Leisure Centre - Café offer is limited • Oxford Ice Rink - There were not many lockers and those in place are small. <p>These are all subjective judgements but have been agreed in discussion with site managers. These observations should be taken to relevant customer panels for discussion to see what actions can be taken to improve them.</p> |

RECOMMENDATION:

The observations from site visits should be taken to customer forums for discussion and then acted upon by Fusion to ensure where possible agreed action is taken

MANAGEMENT RESPONSE:

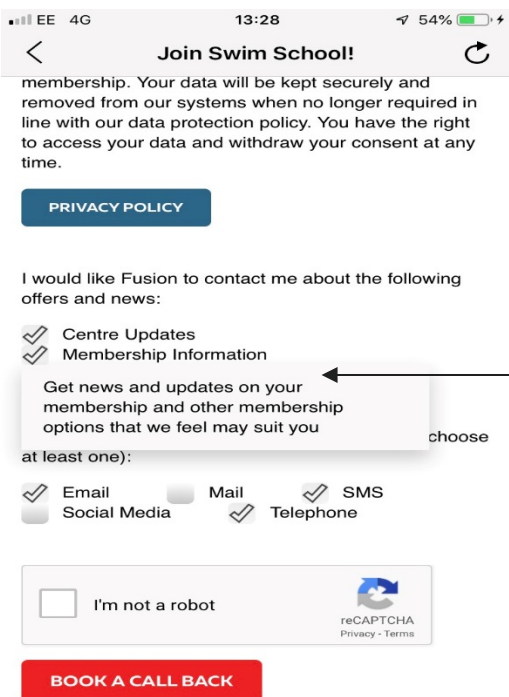
Agreed. Locker repairs have been completed and this is an on-going operational task for Fusion..

Responsible Officer: Lucy Cherry

April 2019

Implementation Date:

RISK: THERE ARE NOT SUFFICIENT ARRANGEMENTS TO ENGAGE WITH CUSTOMERS BASED ON HOW THEY WANT TO BE INTERACTED WITH

| Ref | Significance | Finding |
|-----|--------------|--|
| 8 | L | <p><u>App functionality</u></p> <p>We downloaded the Fusion App and completed a form to sign up for alerts and updates about a particular site. We found that when completing the form it is difficult to select all preferences easily because each time you click an option it provides more information about what the preference is about. Whilst this is very helpful it does mean that you have to click around the App as the pop-up box covers preferences you may wish to select which significantly slows down the process of completing what is a simple form.</p>  <p>Pop-up box cover preference options</p> |

RECOMMENDATION:

Fusion should review the functionality of their App to see how it can be more user friendly around pop up information when selecting preferences.

MANAGEMENT RESPONSE:

Responsible Officer:

Lucy Cherry

Agreed. This has been raised with Fusion's developed to remove these pop-ups. This is expected to be completed by the end of February 2019.

Implementation March 2019
Date:

STAFF INTERVIEWED

BDO LLP APPRECIATES THE TIME PROVIDED BY ALL THE INDIVIDUALS INVOLVED IN THIS REVIEW AND WOULD LIKE TO THANK THEM FOR THEIR ASSISTANCE AND COOPERATION.

| Name | Job Title |
|-------------|---------------------------------|
| Ian Brooke | Head of Service |
| Lucy Cherry | Leisure and Performance Manager |
| Various | Customer Representatives |
| Mark Munday | Fusion |
| Various | Site Managers Fusion |

APPENDIX I - DEFINITIONS

| LEVEL OF ASSURANCE | DESIGN OF INTERNAL CONTROL FRAMEWORK | | OPERATIONAL EFFECTIVENESS OF CONTROLS | |
|--------------------|--|--|---|--|
| | FINDINGS FROM REVIEW | DESIGN OPINION | FINDINGS FROM REVIEW | EFFECTIVENESS OPINION |
| Substantial | Appropriate procedures and controls in place to mitigate the key risks. | There is a sound system of internal control designed to achieve system objectives. | No, or only minor, exceptions found in testing of the procedures and controls. | The controls that are in place are being consistently applied. |
| Moderate | In the main there are appropriate procedures and controls in place to mitigate the key risks reviewed albeit with some that are not fully effective. | Generally a sound system of internal control designed to achieve system objectives with some exceptions. | A small number of exceptions found in testing of the procedures and controls. | Evidence of non compliance with some controls, that may put some of the system objectives at risk. |
| Limited | A number of significant gaps identified in the procedures and controls in key areas. Where practical, efforts should be made to address in-year. | System of internal controls is weakened with system objectives at risk of not being achieved. | A number of reoccurring exceptions found in testing of the procedures and controls. Where practical, efforts should be made to address in-year. | Non-compliance with key procedures and controls places the system objectives at risk. |
| No | For all risk areas there are significant gaps in the procedures and controls. Failure to address in-year affects the quality of the organisation's overall internal control framework. | Poor system of internal control. | Due to absence of effective controls and procedures, no reliance can be placed on their operation. Failure to address in-year affects the quality of the organisation's overall internal control framework. | Non compliance and/or compliance with inadequate controls. |

RECOMMENDATION SIGNIFICANCE

| | |
|--------|--|
| High | A weakness where there is substantial risk of loss, fraud, impropriety, poor value for money, or failure to achieve organisational objectives. Such risk could lead to an adverse impact on the business. Remedial action must be taken urgently. |
| Medium | A weakness in control which, although not fundamental, relates to shortcomings which expose individual business systems to a less immediate level of threatening risk or poor value for money. Such a risk could impact on operational objectives and should be of concern to senior management and requires prompt specific action. |
| Low | Areas that individually have no significant impact, but where management would benefit from improved controls and/or have the opportunity to achieve greater effectiveness and/or efficiency. |

APPENDIX II - TERMS OF REFERENCE

PURPOSE OF REVIEW:

To review the control design and effectiveness with regards to the Council's oversight of /and Fusion Customer Service processes

APPROACH:

Our approach will be to conduct interviews to establish the controls in operation for each of our areas of audit work. We will then seek documentary evidence that these controls are designed as described. We will evaluate these controls to identify whether they adequately address the risks.

We will seek to gain evidence of the satisfactory operation of the controls to verify the effectiveness of the control, which will involve sample testing to ensure compliance with the approved methodology and monitoring and reporting processes.

KEY RISKS:

- The provider has inadequate arrangements to identify the customer backgrounds and habits who use the services offered
- Customer information held is not adequately analysed to develop and deliver services
- There are not sufficient arrangements to engage with customers based on how they want to be interacted with
- Engagement with customers to extract meaningful information to develop and deliver services is ineffective
- Customer information on backgrounds and habits is inadequately reported to the Council
- Either the Council supply inadequate scrutiny and/or the provider provide inadequate information to assess the suppliers resilience to continue deliver services to deliver expectations
- Inadequate progress made on prior year recommendations.

FOR MORE INFORMATION:

Greg Rubins

Greg.Rubins@bdo.co.uk

The matters raised in this report are only those which came to our attention during the course of our audit and are not necessarily a comprehensive statement of all the weaknesses that exist or all improvements that might be made. The report has been prepared solely for the management of the organisation and should not be quoted in whole or in part without our prior written consent. BDO LLP neither owes nor accepts any duty to any third party whether in contract or in tort and shall not be liable, in respect of any loss, damage or expense which is caused by their reliance on this report.

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City Executive Board response to recommendations of the Scrutiny Committee made on 5 March 2019 concerning the Council's approach to a City Centre Public Space Protection Order (PSPO).

| Recommendation | Agree? | Comment |
|--|----------------------------------|--|
| <p>Recommendation 1: That the Council ensures that the consultation on acceptable behaviours in the City Centre actively seeks out the views of:</p> <p>a) People who sleep rough and related third sector support organisations, as well as other vulnerable groups and their associated bodies.</p> <p>b) Thames Valley Police.</p> <p>c) People who are likely to oppose the introduction of PSPOs.</p> | <p>Yes</p> <p>Yes</p> <p>Yes</p> | <p>The consultation will be delivered by an independent organisation who will be tasked with speaking to vulnerable people and rough sleepers.</p> <p>In line with Home Office guidance, the consultation will hear views of all people, some of whom will oppose the introduction of a PSPO. There are some organisation actively campaigning for the abolition of PSPOs – they will be contacted and again if there is a subsequent PSPO consultation.</p> |
| Recommendation 2: That the consultation on acceptable behaviours presents information objectively, and that questions are phrased in an open way. | Yes | No Comment |
| Recommendation 3: That any subsequent City Executive Board report concerning PSPOs discusses alternative approaches to managing unacceptable behaviours, and the benefits and limitations of such approaches. This report should also set out a list of consultees the Council has approached as part of the acceptable behaviours consultation. | <p>Yes</p> <p>Yes</p> | No Comment |
| Recommendation 4: That consideration is given to how the Council could better protect people sleeping rough from violence and abuse. | Yes | Rough sleepers have the right to the same protections as anyone else. Wherever crimes or abuse against rough sleepers is reported, the full weight of the law must be used to bring the perpetrators to justice. |

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City Executive Board response to recommendations of the Finance Panel made on 6 December 2018 concerning Social Value

| <i>Recommendation</i> | <i>Agree?</i> | <i>Comment</i> |
|--|----------------------|--|
| Recommendation 1: That CEB considers introducing a 5% social values weighting for all non OJEU procurement requirements within the Council, which should be reviewed annually (and reported to Finance Panel) to consider whether subsequent increases are appropriate. This change should be subsequently recommended to Council for incorporation in the next Constitution review. | Yes | This will require a change in the Contract Rules within the Councils Constitution but once this is done then appropriate awareness and training can be undertaken with Managers to implement this recommendation. |
| Recommendation 2: That the Council sets a target of paying contracted small and medium size enterprises and voluntary community sector organisations within 14 days of the contract being agreed, where it is requested. | Yes | This policy can be implemented relatively quickly |
| Recommendation 3: That the Council should seek to apply the Green Public Procurement Policy on all of its future contracts, and that these requirements are highlighted to all prospective tenders seeking to bid for a Council contract. | Yes | A number of our contracts already incorporate elements of the Green Public Procurement Policy in relation to some specific items e.g paint. The Procurement Team can introduce this requirement into all tenders that the council is seeking bids for. |

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City Executive Board response to recommendations of the Scrutiny Committee made on 5 March 2019 concerning street art and graffiti

| Recommendation | Agree? | Comment |
|--|---------------|---|
| Recommendation 1: That the Council considers how best to define 'larger commercial ventures' when requiring such private land owners to pay for the removal of graffiti, to ensure the policy is applied consistently. | YES | <p>Larger Commercial Ventures are any business that has more than one premises. For smaller businesses Oxford City Council would seek to remove graffiti of up to 4m².</p> <p>Any racist, obscene, homophobic or hate related graffiti in the public domain will be removed or obscured on all businesses (but only the graffiti that fall into one of the aforementioned categories). All remaining graffiti will be charged as above.</p> |
| Recommendation 2: That the Council engages more widely with residents and other stakeholders (for example through an appreciative enquiry) concerning the use of Street Art in deterring graffiti in and around Meadow Lane. | YES | <p>We currently satisfy this recommendation—the Council engages as widely as possible. We have officers who have strong relationships with community figures and manage street art projects inclusively, and this is an asset to the Council and one we should recognise.</p> <p>As with previous street art projects (for example, at the Murco site) Council officers will continue to engage widely and intensively with residents and all those with a direct interest in the proposal to have street art. So far City officers from the Community Response Team have met with Local Councillors for the Meadow Lane project along with the Chair of Iffley Fields Residents Association (IFRA). The Board Member has been in contact with Local Councillors and interested residents. Officers and Ward Councillors have scrutinised the proposed art project for the Meadow Lane site and an officer has met twice with the Sisters at the convent (they own the wall and have sought street art for it). An officer has met with the artist in residence at local primary school, St Mary and St John to discuss the community project; designed a consultation document approved by the Public Involvement Project Briefing; and is arranging to carry out the consultation. An officer is attending the IFRA AGM to speak to local residents and introduce the consultation document before carrying out consultation.</p> |

| | | |
|--|-----|--|
| Recommendation 3: That the City Executive Board considers how the Council can be creative in deterring graffiti on the commercial security shutters of retail units owned by the Council, to improve the public realm. This could be achieved through the use of street art projects, for example. | YES | <p>As we were referring to Council-owned properties within the meeting, I would welcome local Councillors identifying the premises that would benefit from street art. We would then seek funding for street artwork and link up with local street artists to arrange projects.</p> <p>Any significant intensification of the street art programme would require financial support and further support by all City Councillors. It would be welcome to the CRT to have this funding and support.</p> |
| Recommendation 4: That the Council ensures that decision making processes relating to the delivery of services through Council-owned companies remain open to pre-decision scrutiny, where those matters are reserved for decision making within the Council. | YES | The City Executive Board supports the principle that any substantive change to Council policy, whether delivered directly through the Council or commissioned through its wholly-owned companies, remains open to pre-decision scrutiny. |