

Scrutiny Recommendation 2013 – 2014

All recommendations

Oxfordshire Strategic Economic Plan		
Scrutiny Committee 4th. March		
Recommendation	Outcome	Considered by
Recommendation 1 For all members to see the finalised Oxfordshire Strategic Economic Plan as submitted to Government and kept in touch with the outcomes from this bid.	Agreed	City Executive Board 12 th . March 2014
Recommendation 2 To provide a “governance structure” below the Board Member representative on the Local Strategic Partnership that can deliver on the aim of keeping all members of Council informed and engaged in the detail of progress against selected projects and the likely outcomes for the City and its residents.	Agreed	City Executive Board 12 th . March 2014
Recommendation 3 The Board Member and Officers to do all they can to reflect the City’s ambition of reducing inequality in strategic planning for all themes.	Agreed	City Executive Board 12 th . March 2014
Recommendation 4	Agreed	City Executive Board

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The Board member and Officers to do all they can within the Innovative Place theme to produce excellent links to schools at a very early stage to support good quality advice on educational choices and career planning.		12 th . March 2014
Qtr. 3 Spending		
Finance Panel 3rd. March 2014		
Recommendation	Outcome	Considered by
To explore the use of Framework Agreements to provide project management and delivery of Capital Programme schemes.	Agreed with amendment. Principle agreed but a review of the current position is taking place.	City Executive Board 12 th . March 2014
Employment of staff from BME groups		
Scrutiny Committee – 4th. February 2014		
Recommendation	Outcome	Considered by
To support the use in job adverts of a variety of brandings and styles, rather than the rigorous application of the “Corporate Brand”, in an effort to engagement widely with target groups. To provide money within the Human Resources budget to support this and test the effectiveness of these methods.	Refused – will provide little added value.	Board Member
For the Council to offer a greater number of meaningful work experiences places focused on BME groups to allow potential	Agreed	Board Member

applicants to build a better understanding of the Council and be better prepared for selection processes.		
To build on the success of appointing a significant number of apprentices from BME groups and use these staff as mentors and ambassadors. For this work to be part of the training offer as a development opportunity.	Agreed	Board Member
To consider and bring forward ideas to break down the perception of some BME groups that “the City Council is not for us”. To consider within this how current employees can be used within outreach.	Agreed	Board Member
To show our commitment to addressing the anomalies within the selection process by providing some initial investment money to prepare candidates or potential candidates from BME groups for the selection process. To consider outcomes from this to support future investment in this area.	Agreed	Board Member
Educational attainment Investment Progress		
Scrutiny Committee – 4th. February 2014		
Recommendation	Outcome	Considered by
To welcome the continued investment and work in this area and to see both the evaluation of the Leadership programme and the Key Stage results as soon as they are available.	Noted	City Executive Board 12 th . February 2014

Covered Market Review		
Scrutiny Committee- 4th. February 2014		
Recommendation	Outcome	Considered by
<p>Recommendation 1 The Council should articulate its role in the Covered Market. The Panel believes that this should provide for greater emphasis on the civic importance of the Market and its contribution to the City.</p>	Agreed	City Executive Board 12 th . February 2014
<p>Recommendation 2 The Council should appoint a Market Manager who will be based in the Market and accessible to the traders. The role should include the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Working with the Council and traders to develop the Market for the future, including discussions on the leasing structure and strategy, and the balance of trades • Spending the Councils allocated budget for the Market and commissioning services delivered within that • Promoting the market • Offering training and support for traders • Reviewing the website and keeping it up to date. 	Agreed	City Executive Board 12 th . February 2014
<p>Recommendation 3 In the longer term to evaluate all the options for the management of the market around criteria to be developed by the Market Manager, traders and the City Council.</p>	Agreed	City Executive Board 12 th . February 2014

<p>Recommendation 4 That early negotiations take place between the Council and traders to determine the best rental and licensing structure with the aim of moving as quickly as possible to a clearer and more flexible leasing and licensing arrangement needed to improve relationships and provide the flexibility needed for success.</p>	Agreed	City Executive Board 12 th . February 2014
<p>Recommendation 5 That the Council moves as quickly as possible to improvements to the Market Street entrance to the Market, and begins negotiations with traders on their loading and unloading requirements with the aim of freeing space for the extension of outdoor trading. This should also include discussions on the provision of extra cycle parking.</p>	Agreed	City Executive Board 12 th . February 2014
<p>Recommendation 6 To come forward with temporary arrangements for more visible signage for the Market on High Street including options using the buildings above and free standing signs.</p>	Agreed	City Executive Board 12 th . February 2014
<p>Recommendation 7 To provide money as soon as possible for the improvement of the Market Avenues from High Street.</p>	Agreed	City Executive Board 12 th . February 2014
<p>Recommendation 8 The Council move to commission design options for changes to the Covered Market and for these to include better use of the service yard.</p>	Agreed	City Executive Board 12 th . February 2014

<p>Recommendation 9 That Council actively promotes and includes the Covered Market in their communications and event planning to take the opportunity to highlight the Market as a key destination and also attract a more diverse range of people into it.</p>	<p>Agreed</p>	<p>City Executive Board 12th. February 2014</p>
<p>Budget and MTFS Review 14/15 to 16/17</p> <p>Scrutiny Finance Panel – 27th. January 2014</p>		
<p>Recommendation</p>	<p>Outcome</p>	<p>Considered by</p>
<p>Recommendation 1 To welcome the changes in the methodology for calculating contingencies for the non-achievement of savings, efficiencies and income and change the ratings as proposed in the tables above. To leave the overall total as currently proposed in the budget.</p>	<p>Agreed</p>	<p>City Executive Board 12th. February 2014</p>
<p>Recommendation 2 To adjust the budget as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Remove the £110k pressure for additional waste disposal costs because the Head of Service is no longer expecting these to be incurred. • To add an additional saving line for Housing and Property of £35k for supplies and services which is available to replace a saving that is very likely to be achieved. 	<p>Agreed with the exception of the first bullet point which is refused. The low carbon omission is £50k.</p>	<p>City Executive Board 12th. February 2014</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To add an amount of at least £25k to the new investment “Low Carbon Oxford” budget line. • To reinstate at least half of the total of deleted community development grants to provide confidence of funding for the expected new initiatives in 14/15. • To keep under review the expected self-financing of the Design Review Panel. 		
<p>Recommendation 3 For City Executive Board to require the Chief Executive to set a clear process, criteria and expectation for invest to save bids and challenge the organisation to be more imaginative in this area.</p>	Agreed	City Executive Board 12 th . February 2014
<p>Recommendation 4 Investment is made in a market analysis of trading opportunities and the skills needed to take advantage of these. For the Trading Group to use this information to refocus the Council’s trading and investment work.</p>	Agreed	City Executive Board 12 th . February 2014
<p>Recommendation 5 That the impact of budget proposals on jobs is set within agreed criteria and then reconsidered within this MTFs.</p>	Refused. Only 1 omission which will be amended in the final budget proposals.	City Executive Board 12 th . February 2014
<p>Recommendation 6 The reporting and control of post reductions is reconciled more effectively to provide an accurate picture of the effects of budget changes in our establishment now and for the future.</p>	Agreed	City Executive Board 12 th . February 2014

<p>Recommendation 7 That a strategic “health check” is provided to ensure that the staff skill and experience level across the whole authority is maintained at high levels. For this to be reported at the beginning of each year.</p>	<p>Not agreed This Isn't the best strategic measure are we delivering against objectives? Operationally this is something management are constantly appraising through the Council's performance management system.</p>	<p>City Executive Board 12th. February 2014</p>
<p>Recommendation 8 To express concern at the absence of good quality outcome monitoring from the Council's investment in Youth Activities. To note that some better quality information is expected but, as this programme goes into its third year, to require this before the end of 13/14.</p>	<p>Agreed with amendment. Has already been recognised by officers.</p>	<p>City Executive Board 12th. February 2014</p>
<p>Recommendation 9 That the Council to take the Council Tax Freeze Grant should the Council Tax increase referendum trigger be set below 1.49%.</p>	<p>Refused. Would erode the base budget.</p>	<p>City Executive Board 12th. February 2014</p>
<p>Recommendation 10 That the prudent approach to the likely withdrawal of Revenue Support Grant is applied to the Housing Benefit Administration Grant and judgements are made and reflected in the budget of the likely loss of some grant between 15/16 and 17/18.</p>	<p>Refused. Specific grant so will reduce spending within the same profile as reducing grant.</p>	<p>City Executive Board 12th. February 2014</p>
<p>Recommendation 11 During the coming year to reappraise the current and likely trends within homelessness and related issues, to provide a</p>	<p>Agreed</p>	<p>City Executive Board 12th. February 2014</p>

clearer view of the capital and revenue effects and the need for and scale of reserves.		
Recommendation 12 To review procurement within the Capital Programme to remove some risk and ensure value for money. In particular to consider the merits of Framework Contracts.	Refused Framework Contracts are already used. Slippage is more about project management.	City Executive Board 12 th . February 2014
Recommendation 13 As investment with property funds increase to keep under review the need for provisions in the accounts for increases and reductions in property values.	Agreed	City Executive Board 12 th . February 2014
Treasury Management Strategy 14/15		
Scrutiny Finance Panel – 27th. January 2014		
Recommendation	Outcome	Considered by
Recommendation 1 To include a commentary on Community Infrastructure Levy income and spending within the Treasury Management Strategy.	Refused Too early to state the CIL level. A report will be coming forward to CEB but this is not a matter for the Treasury Management Strategy.	City Executive Board 12 th . February 2014
Recommendation 2 To adjust the reporting of Prudential Borrowing between internal and external borrowing.	Agreed with amendment. This can be determined from the report but clearer labelling will be provided in future.	City Executive Board 12 th . February 2014
Recommendation 3		City Executive Board

To provide for the Scrutiny Committee in March information on the risks and opportunities presented by the upward trend of accumulated balances within the HRA.	Agreed with amendment. Will provide but not until end of year reporting.	12 th . February 2014
Recommendation 4 To keep under review provisions reflecting increasing and reducing property values and report to the Scrutiny Committee the “triggers” for a change in the current approach.	Agreed.	City Executive Board 12 th . February 2014
Improving Quality in the Private Rented Sector		
Scrutiny Housing Panel 15th. January 2014.		
Recommendation	Outcome	Considered by
That it is not appropriate for the Council to establish a Local Lettings Agency with the purpose of driving up housing standards in the Private rented Sector in the City.	Agreed	Board Member.
That the Council should further consider alternative approaches to this, that would seek to achieve the same policy objective through different means.	Agreed	Board Member
Satisfaction with Parks		
Scrutiny housing Panel 15th. January 2014		
Recommendation	Outcome	Considered by

That actual users of the Parks should be consulted rather than using the Talk Back Panel, for example football clubs.	Agreed with amendment. This is done once a year	Head of Leisure Parks and Communities.
That Parks Friends/User groups should be surveyed on their satisfaction with their parks, groups that were established to work with the Council to improve parks and green spaces in the City.	Agreed with amendment. They have the opportunity to complete the annual satisfaction survey and sometimes volunteer to interview customers. Friends are also involved in the annual review of Park Management plans and help to set priorities for improvement.	Head of Leisure Parks and Communities.
That following the increased investment in parks, especially in play areas, this should be monitored to ensure that these facilities are maintained.	Agreed with amendment. This is monitored through CORVU	Head of Leisure Parks and Communities.

Community Engagement Plan		
Scrutiny Committee – 3rd. December 2013.		
Recommendation	Outcome	Considered by
To provide a clear statement in the Plan, supported by guidance to services, of the need for all engagement to link in order to deliver the overall aims of the Community Engagement Plan.	Agreed	City Executive Board 11 th . December 2013.
To ensure that the guidance and Tool Kit are fit for purpose for	Agreed	City Executive Board

the many diverse groups the Council is seeking to engage with.		11 th . December 2013.
To consider in the Community Engagement Plan the role played by councillors, how this is supported through advice and training and is linked into democratic processes.	Agreed	City Executive Board 11 th . December 2013.
In order to improve engagement in the consultation process of this document to include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A simple questionnaire built around the main areas of consideration. • Examples of good and poor engagement activities. 	Awaiting	City Executive Board 11 th . December 2013.
To emphasis and give more weight in the Plan to looking for and encouraging engagement at a very local level to ensure communities can help shape decisions and issues that matter to them.	Agreed	City Executive Board 11 th . December 2013.
To recognise within the Plan and Tool Kit the importance of defining what might constitute a Hard to Reach Group as broadly as possible and on a case by case basis.	Agreed	City Executive Board 11 th . December 2013.
Housing Strategy – Refresh		
Scrutiny Housing Panel – 5th. December 2013.		
Recommendation	Outcome	Considered by
That the implementation of a new Landlord and Lettings Agencies Accreditation Scheme be publicised as widely as	Agreed	City Executive Board 11 th . December 2013.

possible to achieve the greatest impact and that the number of Landlords in the scheme be maximised.		
<p>Opportunities for young people that are NEAT</p> <p>Scrutiny Committee – 3rd. December 2013.</p>		
Recommendation	Outcome	Considered by
To look at the essential requirements for entry level jobs to ensure that there are no barriers to employment that aren't necessary or could be delivered through training, support or mentoring . When we are doing this to be prepared to take some chances in an effort to provide employment opportunities to those who would otherwise not be considered.	Agreed Will review essential criteria and report results to April meeting.	Head of Human Resources and Facilities.
<p>Treasury Management – Qtr. 2</p> <p>Scrutiny Finance Panel – 7th. November 2013.</p>		
Recommendation	Outcome	Considered by
The Finance Scrutiny Panel has serious concerns about the Co-operative Banks current position and their recent statements. The Panel wishes to see an urgent review of their position as the Council's in-house bank to allow for more informed choices to be made.	Agreed with amendment. Will retender at the end of the current contract – April 2015	City Executive Board 11 th . December 2013.

Should a change of in house bank prove prudent or necessary; to ensure that ethical standards and investment remain part of the specification.	Agreed	City Executive Board 11 th . December 2013.
To provide to the Panel in 6 months time a review of the performance of the Council's non specified investments considering in particular, diversity and mix, returns and a benchmark across the public sector for the percentage of funds allocated to this type of investment. To provide options based on this to increase returns. <input type="checkbox"/>	Agreed	City Executive Board 11 th . December 2013.
Oxpens Site Master Plan		
Scrutiny Committee 5th. November 2013.		
Recommendation	Outcome	Considered by
To support the Oxpens Site Master Plan noting the concerns made by some committee members.	Agreed with amendment. The Board commented that this an outline Master Plan and these concerns will be considered in more detail as we move forward through the planning process.	City Executive Board 13 th . November 2013.
Riverside Land Aquisition		
Scrutiny Committee 5th. November 2013		

Recommendation	Outcome	Considered by
To support the proposals in the report and ask the City Executive Board to note the offer of residents.	Agreed. Officer will talk directly to residents about their offer.	City Executive Board 13 th . November 2013.
Waste and Recycling Strategy		
Scrutiny Committee 5th. November 2013		
Recommendation	Outcome	Considered by
That the strategy reflects in its vision the view that waste is a resource and a commodity from which the Council can generate income, and that the Council should continually be looking for further opportunities to benefit financially from the waste that the City produces.	Agreed	City Executive Board 13 th . November 2013.
That CEB investigate and cost opportunities to pre-sort and divert recyclables from household waste collection before sending it to landfill.	Refused The Board Member agreed that this was needed within the County but the County Council has decided on incineration. Any consideration of an MRF provided by the City would be unaffordable. We are tackling these issues using other solutions.	
That the City Executive Board provide to the Scrutiny Committee more detailed information on the costing and	Agreed	

feasibility for the options to recycle food from flats that have been considered alongside the details of the current capital bid		
That CEB more actively use the penalty at its disposal to convince residents who do not present waste in the manner required.	Agreed	
That CEB investigate, through the Oxfordshire Waste Partnership, local opportunities to reduce excess packaging and reduce the use of plastic bags.	Agreed	
That CEB take all opportunities to promote the benefits of food waste separation to commercial customers and investigate opportunities to offer incentives to new business customers.	Agreed	
Performance Indicator LP106		
Scrutiny Committee – 1st. October 2013		
Recommendation	Outcome	Considered by
The Committee is pleased to see improvements in participation amongst target groups and looks forward to reviewing this data in more detail at the end of the year. The overall target improvement of 5% is consistently overachieved so the Committee want to see a more challenging target set to ensure that we are challenging the provider to do the best they can in this important community development area. The target should be at least that achieved in the previous year.	Refused RESPONSE: "While leisure usage by target groups continues to increase, we'd like to do better still. We're looking at why the increase in usage by target groups appears to have slowed down last quarter, including	Board Member for Leisure Services. Recommendation sent 8 th . October 2013.

	<p>the way usage is measured, the effect of weather conditions, and the deteriorating state of Temple Cowley Pool, as well as what more we could do to publicise what's available and make it more attractive.</p> <p>"The Council and Fusion remain determined to meet and exceed the 5% target, as we have in previous years. However, until the reasons for last quarter's performance have been determined and we have a slightly longer indication of trend to work with, I don't think it would be helpful to adjust the target. We will of course keep this under review."</p>	
<p>Operation of Neighbourhood Action Groups (NAGs)</p> <p>Scrutiny Committee – 1st. October 2013</p>		
<p>Recommendation</p>	<p>Outcome</p>	<p>Considered by</p>
<p>As a follow up, I have been asked to remind you that members of the Scrutiny Committee would be very grateful if you could reflect their views when next you contact the local Police Commander; and in particular if you could ask the Commander where he/she sees the role of NAGS – what is their priority in</p>	<p>Agree.</p> <p>Response from Cllr. Kennedy on the agenda.</p>	<p>Board Member for Education, Crime and Community Safety.</p> <p>Recommendation sent</p>

Police work?		2 nd . October 2013.
Grants Commissioning Review		
Scrutiny Committee – 1st. October 2013		
Recommendation	Outcome	Considered by
That a member of the Scrutiny Committee has a seat on the Welfare Reform Members Panel. This would be Councillor Coulter until May 2014.	Agreed with amendment. Scrutiny Councillor to have observer status on the Welfare reform Members Panel.	City Executive Board 9 th . October
City Deal Bid		
Scrutiny Committee – 1st. October 2013		
Recommendation	Outcome	Considered by
For the expected future reports (recommendation 4 in the report) to establish the principle of public scrutiny through Local Authority Scrutiny Committees and discuss how this might work.	Agreed	City Executive Board 9 th . October
In developing the ambitions and programmes within the “Skills “ heading for Joint Committee Members to ensure that education, training and apprenticeship programmes are accessible to all through local schools and other educational	Agreed	

bodies with an emphasis on early advice and guidance to young people so they are “work ready” for real jobs. For the emphasis of these programmes to be in areas of highest deprivation.		
Customer Contract Strategy		
Scrutiny Committee – 5th. September 2013		
Recommendation	Outcome	Considered by
To ensure that separate arrangements for consultation with the Business Community are included in the information gathering to inform the final Strategy.	Agreed	City Executive Board 11 th . September
To explore the use of Skype as a communication tool within this Strategy.	Agreed with Amendment Will explore Skype as a communication tool along with other methods rather than in isolation.	
To ensure that any service developments are evaluated financially around clear value for money principles.	Agreed	
Budget Spending – Qtr. 1		
Finance Scrutiny Panel – 6th. September 2013		
Recommendation	Outcome	Considered by

To express concern about the availability of resources to deliver the Capital Programme.	Noted – arrangements already being considered	City Executive Board 11 th . September
To reconsider the reporting of the Commercial Property rental measure using dates that align to produce a more accurate picture of performance.	Agreed	
That the City Executive Board bring forward their strategy for the provision of contingencies with the forthcoming medium Term Financial Strategy to the next meeting of the Panel in November.	Noted – will happen as part of the MTFS in December	
Treasury Management – Qtr. 1		
Finance Scrutiny Panel – 6th. September 2013		
Recommendation	Outcome	Considered by
To raise the non-specified investment limits from their current levels and redefine what is grouped in this area to manage risk, in an effort to encourage investment diversity and higher rates of return.	Refused	City Executive Board 11 th . September
Wherever it provides for good value for money to consider using investment funds for internal borrowing in order to avoid prudential borrowing.	Noted this is already done	
Allocation Scheme Review		
Housing Scrutiny Panel – 3rd. September 2013		

Recommendation	Outcome	Considered by
A Communication Strategy should be in place to explain the scheme as agreed, what it means for applicants alongside some general information on the likelihood of being housed. Communication should include the opportunity for feedback on the scheme itself and the understandability of it.	Agreed	City Executive Board 11 th . September
Youth Ambition Strategy		
Scrutiny Committee – 2nd July		
Recommendation	Outcome	Considered by
To provide now a set of concrete outcome measures focused on the direct effects on the ambitions and pathways of the young people involved in this work.	Agreed	City Executive Board 10 th . July
To monitor and revisit regularly the type of activity provided to ensure that it is flexible, contemporary and engaging the right numbers, in the right place, at the right time.	Agreed	City Executive Board 10 th . July
To express the need for the provision of safe spaces for young people to express themselves as an overarching priority for all the schemes, actions and outcomes within this Strategy.	Agreed	City Executive Board 10 th . July
Low Emission Strategy and Air Quality Action Plan		
Scrutiny Committee – 2nd. July		

Recommendation	Outcome	Considered by
To support the setting of the Low Emissions Strategy and ambitions but for the City Executive Board to require early reference of the document to the Carbon and Natural Resources Members Board so that gaps on data, resources and financing can be discussed and a robust action plan produced.	Agreed	City Executive Board 10 th . July
<p>Discretionary Housing Payments</p> <p>Scrutiny Committee – 4th. June 2013</p>		
Recommendation	Outcome	Considered by
To organise a general campaign of clear advice through as many agencies, partnerships and offices as possible making it clear the temporary nature of Discretionary Housing Payments and the requirements to engage in more sustainable solutions.	Agreed	City Executive Board 12 th . June 2013
To extend current out reach work to include benefit take-up to maximise benefits to current and potential claimants.	Agreed with amendment. Clarity in some aspects of Welfare reform is needed.	City Executive Board 12 th . June 2013
To keep the Discretionary Housing Payment Policy under review and in particular to revisit it once regulations on further Welfare Reform are clear.	Agreed	City Executive Board 12 th . June 2013

For the Scrutiny Committee to be included in the monitoring arrangements for this policy in both financial and outcome terms. To see this at the September Scrutiny Committee.	Agree	City Executive Board 12 th . June 2013
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