**Scrutiny Work Programme 2014 - 2015**

This programme represents the work of Scrutiny, including panel work and Committee items. The work programme is divided under the following headings:

1. Standing Panels
2. Review Panels in progress
3. Potential Review Panels (to be established if and when resources allow)
4. Items for Scrutiny Committee meetings
5. Items called in and Councillor calls for action
6. Items referred to Scrutiny by Council
7. Draft Scrutiny Committee agenda schedule
8. **Standing Panels**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Topic** | **Area(s) for focus** | **Nominated councillors (no substitutions allowed** |
| Finance Panel – All finance issues considered within the Scrutiny Function. | See appendix 1 | Lead: Councillor Simmons  Councillors Darke, Fooks and Fry |
| Housing – All strategic and landlord issues considered within the Scrutiny Function. | See appendix 2 | Lead: To be confirmed  Co-opted Member – Linda Hill  Councillors Hollick, Sanders and Wade |

1. **Review panels in progress**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Topic** | **Scope** | **Progress** | **Next steps** | **Nominated councillors** |
| Thames Water investment to improve flooding and sewerage issues in the City. | Issue carried forward from 13/14 Work Programme.  To continue engagement with Thames Water Utilities (TWU) at a senior level to ensure delivery of the agreements reached. | Panel members met with TWU in May and obtained agreement to bring forward a whole area study of the condition of Oxford’s sewerage system.  The governance of this process and subsequent investment will be monitored and challenged via an Expert Group and a Steering Group including Members from the Scrutiny Panel and Officers. | Catchment study will be publically launched at Flood Alliance meeting on 16 October and a joint press statement issued in advance.  Governance arrangements to be established.  Panel to meet in early 2015 and again once the catchment study is nearing completion. | Lead: Councillor Darke  Councillors Pressel, Thomas, Goddard |
| Oxford Standard Panel | To give advice to the City Executive Board on the content and definition of the Oxford Standard for all Council properties.  To outline the timeframe for delivery of this standard. To use the experience and views of tenants and members when delivering the decent homes standard. To comment on the process of this delivery. | Data from the stock condition survey considered by the Group.  Broader tenant consultation underway.  Report to be complete in time to feed into the asset Management strategy at CEB in October. | Final report due to go to Scrutiny Committee and City Executive Board in October. | Housing Standing Panel members plus the Tenant Scrutiny Group  Joint Chairing |

1. **Potential Review Panels – to be established if and when resources allow (no particular order)**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Topic** | **Area(s) for focus** | **Nominated councillors** |
| Budget Scrutiny | Review of budget proposals. Scope to be agreed by Finance Panel in October. | Finance Standing Panel Members |
| Tacking Inequality | Scope to be determined. Panel to consider which area to focus on first:   * Child Poverty * Food Poverty * Health inequality   The approach could include:   * Understanding the causes and extent of poverty in Oxford. * Determining the impact that the City Council has on both causing and mitigating poverty in Oxford, either directly or in partnership with others. * Identifying other types of support that are available locally and how people in need can access these. * Recommending how policy, expenditure and partnership working could be strengthened to improve the situations of people affected by poverty. | Councillors Coulter, Lloyd-Shogbesan, Thomas |
| Growing a Low-Carbon Economy | Scope to be determined. Panel to consider area(s) of focus which could include one or more of the following:   * Review the City Council’s approach to growing a low-carbon economy. * Renewable energy generated on Council owned buildings and land. * Review the Council’s Sustainable Energy Action Plan. | Councillor Upton |
| Community Engagement | Scope to be determined. Panel to consider area(s) of focus which could include on or more of the following:   * Review how the City Council engages with community leaders and groups to build an on-going dialogue, and their perceptions of the City Council. * Identify and explore key interfaces with Council services and the satisfaction levels, feedback and common complaints. * Review participation levels in consultations and explore reasons for low participation. | Councillors Hollick, Lloyd-Shogbesan, Altaf-Khan |
| Support for the local economy | Scope to be determined. Panel to consider area(s) of focus which could include:   * Explore how the Council’s activities support the local economy and whether there is a case for doing more. * Review efforts to improve relationships with traders and their satisfaction levels. * Explore how smaller businesses can access City Deal funding. | Councillors Fry, Benjamin, Darke |
| Cycling | Scope to be determined. Panel to consider area(s) of focus which could include:   * Review cycling funding including City and County Council contributions. * Explore progress against sought outcomes and value for money achieved. | Councillors Wolff, Upton |
| Recycling | Continuation of review established in 2013/14:   * To receive an update on the Recycling Fund. * To consider community incentives and how to measure their success. * Review of recycling rates (at Scrutiny Committee). | Councillors Fry, Hayes, Simmons |

1. **Items for Committee meetings**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Topic** | **Area(s) for focus** | **Lead and other Councillors** |
| Discretionary Housing Payments | Quarterly updates on spending profiles within a framework agreed by the Committee. | Lead: Councillor Coulter |
| Performance monitoring | Quarterly report on a set of Corporate and service measures chosen by the Committee. | Councillors Altaf-Khan, Simmons, Coulter & Darke |
| Educational attainment investment | To consider the academic progress and key stage results at schools operating the KRM model compared to those not. | Councillors Altaf-Khan, & Thomas |
| Fusion Lifestyle contract performance | Regular yearly item agreed again by the Committee to consider performance against contact conditions. | Lead Member: Councillor Simmons |
| Research commissioned on the effects of welfare reform | To consider research into the impact of welfare reforms in the City. | Lead Member: Councillor Coulter |
| Highways contract | To review and monitor current arrangements. | TBA |
| Clean streets | To receive an update on the City Council’s approach to keeping Oxford streets clean from graffiti, detritus, littering and waste. | TBA |
| Living Wage | To review how the living wage is enforced through procurement contracts | TBA |
| New controls over anti-social behaviour | To receive an update on the City Council’s changing approach to anti-social behaviour. | TBA |
| Low Carbon Oxford | To receive an update on the progress of this scheme and plans to progress the low carbon agenda in Oxford. | TBA |
| Community and Neighbourhood services | To review aims, activities and outcomes; grant distribution; community centres and associations; volunteering; Neighbourhood plans; how better on-going engagement can be established with different communities. | TBA |
| Activities for older residents and preventing isolation | To receive an update on services and activities for over 50s, with a focus on preventing isolation. | TBA |
| Individual voter registration | To receive an update on changes to electoral registration and to monitor how the City Council is maximising registration. | TBA |
| Taxi Licencing | To review rules and processes; to understand driver issues. | TBA |
| Any item called from the Forward Plan for pre decision scrutiny. | To consider and comment on issues to be decided by the City Executive Board. | N/A |

1. **Items Called in and Councillor Calls for Action**

None

1. **Items referred to Scrutiny by Council**

None

1. **Draft Scrutiny Committee Agenda Schedule**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Date *(all 6pm, St. Aldate’s Room)*** | **Agenda Item** | **Lead Member; Officer(s)** |
| 6October 2014 | 1. Oxford Standard Panel Report 2. Educational attainment investment 3. Welfare reform, European social fund project – pre-scrutiny 4. Towards mental wellbeing and community resilience in Oxford – pre-scrutiny 5. Culture Strategy – pre-scrutiny | Cllr Smith  Cllr Pat Kennedy; Anna Wright  Cllr Brown, Ian Brooke, Paul Wilding  Cllr Turner; Val Johnson  Cllr Simm, Cllr Lygo; Peter McQuitty, Ceri Gordon |
| 10November 2014 | 1. Budget Scrutiny proposal 2. Consultation and Engagement – interim update report 3. Performance monitoring – quarter 2 4. Enfranchisement and Empowerment - Individual voter registration 5. Discretionary Housing Payments | Cllr Simmons  Sadie Paige  Neil Lawrence  Jeremy Thomas, Martin John  Cllr Susan Brown; Paul Wilding |
| 8 December 2014 | 1. Research into the local impact of Welfare Reform 2. Corporate Peer Challenge Action Plan | Paul Wilding  Cllr Price; Peter Sloman |
| 19 January 2015 | 1. New Council controls over anti-social behaviour | Richard Adams |
| 3 February 2015 | 1. Performance monitoring – quarter 3 2. Cycle City 3. Community and Neighbourhood services 4. Activities for older residents and preventing isolation | Neil Lawrence  Jo Colwell  Ian Brooke  Vicki Galvin and Luke Nipen |
| 2 March 2015 | 1. Consultation and Engagement | Sadie Paige |
| 23 March 2015 | 1. Low Carbon Oxford | John Copley |
| 5 May 2015 | 1. Recycling – progress of targeted initiatives | Geoff Corps |

**Appendix 1 - Finance Panel work programme 2014-15**

**Items for Finance Panel meetings**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Suggested Topic** | **Suggested approach / area(s) for focus** |
| Budget Scrutiny | Review of the Council’s medium term financial strategy. |
| Budget monitoring | Regular monitoring of projected budget outturns through the year. |
| Treasury Management | Scrutiny of the Treasury Management Strategy and regular monitoring of Treasury performance. |
| Capital process | To receive an update on the implementation of the Capital Gateway process. |
| Maximising European funding | To consider how the City Council can maximise funding opportunities; invite local MEPs to contribute to the discussion. |
| Municipal bonds | To receive an update on the establishment of a municipal bonds agency. |
| Ethical investment | To monitor the City Council’s approach to implementing an ethical investment policy. |
| Council tax exemptions | To receive an update on the financial implications of different types of exemptions. |

**Draft Finance Panel agenda schedule**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Date, room and time** | **Agenda Item** | **Lead Member; Officer(s)** |
| 8 October 2014, St Aldate’s Room, 5.30pm | 1. Municipal bonds 2. Budget Review - scope proposal | Nigel Kennedy  Andrew Brown |
| 21 January 2015, St Aldate’s Room, 5.30pm | 1. Capital programme process review update 2. European funding | David Edwards, Stephen Clarke, Nigel Kennedy  MEPs, Heads of Service, Mark Lundy? |
| 5 February 2015, St Aldate’s Room, 5.30pm | 1. Budget monitoring – quarter 3 2. Treasury Management Strategy 15/16 | Nigel Kennedy  Anna Winship |

**Appendix 2 - Draft Housing Panel work programme 2014-15**

**Items for Housing Panel meetings**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Suggested Topic** | **Suggested approach / area(s) for focus** |
| Performance monitoring | Regular monitoring of performance measures for Estates Regeneration, Housing Supply and Welfare Reform and Housing Crisis. |
| Housing Strategy | Review headline priorities and sought outcomes in Housing Strategy at draft stage, and the action plan post-consultation. |
| Increasing the provision of affordable housing | Monitoring of performance measures; scrutiny of the Housing Business Plan and the Housing Strategy; consider alternative options e.g. pre-fabs and ‘pods’; possible review topic. |
| Homelessness | Monitoring of performance measures; scrutiny of the Housing Business Plan and Housing Strategy; pre-scrutiny of homelessness grant allocations; possible review topics. |
| Rent arrears | Monitoring of performance measures; bi-annual update reports. |
| STAR survey results | Monitoring of results. |
| Tackling under-occupancy | Report on efforts to tackle under-occupancy; consider in rent arrears reports. |
| Oxford Standard | To receive a progress update on the delivery of the Oxford Standard through the Asset Management Strategy and Action Plan, including an update on work to improve thermal efficiency in the Council’s housing stock. |
| Private sector licencing | Update report on the scheme; consider views of landlords and PRS tenants. |
| Unlawful dwellings | A report on the City Council’s approach to tackling illegal dwellings e.g. beds in sheds, given that funding ends in April 2015. |
| Repairs exemptions policy | To scrutinise proposed changes to the current policy. |
| De-designation of 40+ accommodation | Update report on the final phase of de-designating 40+ accommodation (expected in April 15). |
| Sheltered Housing | Scrutiny of changes to the City Council’s sheltered housing stock. This could include reviewing the County Council’s plans and/or the provision of extra care and virtual extra care. |
| Fuel Poverty | To receive an update on the City Council’s approach to the issue of Fuel Poverty. Commission/review research; consider during other items; possible review topic. |
| Supporting people | Verbal updates on the joint commissioning of housing support services. |

**Draft Housing Panel Agenda Schedules**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Date, room and time** | **Agenda Item** | **Lead Member; Officer(s)** |
| 9 October 2014, Plowman Room, 5pm | 1. Performance Monitoring 2. Draft Housing Strategy 3. Rent arrears 4. Leaseholder Payment Options for Major Works | Neil Lawrence  Cllr Seamons; Gary Parsons    Helen Bishop  Cllr Seamons; David Watt |
| 1. January, 5.30pm (TBC) | 1. Housing budget Scrutiny session. Key documents include the Housing Business Plan, Housing Strategy and Housing Asset Management Strategy | Cllr Seamons; David Edwards, Stephen Clarke |
| 22 January 2015, Plowman Room, 5pm | 1. Star Survey Results | Gary Parsons |
| 4 February 2015, St Aldate’s Room, 5.30pm | 1. Unlawful dwellings | Ian Wright |