

Suggested executive responses to the recommendations of the Inequality Panel provided by the Leader of the Council

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#	Recommendation	Agree?	Comment
1	That the City Council leads on the development of a long-term multi-agency inequality strategy for Oxford. This should be informed in part by the evidence gathered in this Inequality Review and enhanced when Oxfordshire Clinical Commissioning Group produces its report on health inequalities. The Strategy should be supported by an Action Plan that includes any accepted Inequality Panel recommendations.	In part	The Oxford Strategic Partnership has been leading a multi-agency programme entitled 'Tackling the Cycle of Deprivation' for a number of years and the CCG review will build on the OSP's work. Many of the recommendations from the Panel are being addressed through existing strategies and action plans, and we would propose to return to the question of whether an overall strategy document and plan when the outcome of the CCG work is published.
2	That the City Council ensures it has sufficient staffing resources in partnership posts to play a leading role in working with partners to deliver on a multi-agency inequality strategy for Oxford (see recommendation 1). We envisage that savings are achievable from overcoming silos and working in partnership to tackle long terms issues associated with inequality.	Agreed	<p>Agreed in principle, but the current pressures on local authority and NHS budgets make it difficult to guarantee that the desired staffing resources can be made available from year to year. Our approach to the influencing and development of strategies and policies is based on a matrix approach and includes influencing strategies and policies for the key strategic Oxfordshire Partnerships, the Oxford Strategic Partnership and ensuring consistency and alignment, where appropriate, to Oxford City Council policies and plans. The new Assistant Chief Executive role will provide additional capacity in this area.</p> <p>Policy Officers Group, with representation from all service areas, is used to cascade and share information and best practice in developing our policies internally.</p> <p>Annex 1 attached provides further information.</p>
3	That the City Council commissions Professor Danny Dorling and the City Council's Social Research Officer to develop an Oxford City Inequality Index based on aspects of inequality that that the City Council can influence either	Not agreed	<p>The Council uses ONS data and small area statistics and publishes these in an accessible form (see the Council monthly charts and other useful information available on the Oxford City Web site:</p> <p>http://www.oxford.gov.uk/PageRender/decC/Statistics_about_Oxf</p>

	directly, or indirectly to a significant extent. Council Performance should be assessed against the movement of this index.		ord_occw.htm It is not clear what a specific City Index would add to what is already available and as a stand- alone index it would lack credibility with central government or the EU, who have their own definitions of deprivation and inequality for benchmarking and resource allocation.
4	That all strategy papers and major decisions should include an assessment of their short, medium and long term impacts on inequality. This assessment could be based on an Inequality Index (see recommendation 3), and guidance should be available to assessing officers.	Agreed	The Council's existing equality impact assessment process requires officers and Members to consider the impact of decisions and actions on groups with protected characteristics. Currently these do not include socio economic inequalities and including them as a required part of the process will involve careful definition and extensive training. The Corporate Lead (HR / OD) will review the current process in line with best practice during the autumn.
5	That the City Council progresses all options for boosting the supply of affordable housing, including by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Continuing to push for a review of the Green Belt around Oxford as part of a wider county land review to identify sites for new housing, b) Enforcing the City Council's 50% affordable housing policy, c) Considering greater use of Compulsory Purchase Orders to buy derelict land and properties that aren't coming forward for development, d) Evaluating the potential local impacts of the new Government's housing policies, such as the extension of the Right to Buy scheme to housing association properties, e) Encouraging ethical or institutional investors to rent good standard 	Agreed	Agreed, with some reservations about the practicality of 5h. Recommendation 5 a) to f) are already part of the Council's normal business. Recommendation 5g) is being taken forward by the Council's Ageing Successfully Group that is working with Age UK Oxfordshire on a Home Share Programme in Oxford that has been funded by the Lloyds Bank Foundation and the Big Lottery Fund . On 5h) the Council's allocations policies aim to assist 'downsizing' where residents wish but organising transfers on a collective basis would be extremely difficult and unlikely to accommodate many community groups who are characterised by different current housing tenures.

	<p>accommodation to people in housing need at affordable rates,</p> <p>f) Aiming to make Oxford a centre of excellence in innovation for new social and affordable housing solutions, ensuring that its own policies (such as the Balance of Dwellings Policy) are compatible with this aim. Affordable Oxford could be asked to provide advice on what options would be viable in Oxford,</p> <p>g) Considering whether there is scope for the City Council or the Universities to promote 'inter-generational shared living'.</p> <p>h) Considering whether there is a way the City Council could assist groups of older people in downsizing collectively while staying together as a community, perhaps by creating a group or register that people can join or sign up to.</p>		
6	<p>We note the significant difficulties that schools, hospitals and universities (as well as businesses) face in attracting workers to settle in Oxford, and recommend that the City Council:</p> <p>a) Gathers evidence as soon as possible to identify the best way of delivering new build keyworker housing within the 20% of affordable housing provided as intermediate housing,</p> <p>b) Seeks to extend its keyworker housing intervention to more teachers (this is currently offered to senior teaching staff),</p> <p>c) Considers whether there is scope to assist key workers (particularly teachers in priority</p>	Agreed	<p>Recommendation 6a) is in hand and will form part of a wider review of affordable housing and planning policies. Recommendation 6b) has been implemented with the scheme open to all teachers from the beginning of July, following consultation with schools. Recommendation 6c) will be difficult to achieve as the Council has no means of practically influencing private sector rents and landlords' letting policies but the proposals could be put forward to key landlords and agents.</p>

	schools) in accessing housing in the private rented sector, for example by encouraging registered landlords to offer 3 year tenancies and agreeing to raise rents by no more than the CPI measure of inflation.		
7	We note that the City Council is developing a Private Rented Sector Strategy and recommend that this aims to extend the City Council's interventions in the private rented sector to address abuses in the student housing market and poor standards across the wider private rented sector. This should include the extension of discretionary licensing to cover more properties where possible, enhanced enforcement of the HMO licensing regime and further promotion of landlord accreditation to encourage take up.	Agreed	We agree to take this recommendation into account in developing the strategy. Work is underway on identifying the most appropriate extension of discretionary licensing following the introduction of legislative restrictions by the government. The HMO Licensing Scheme is currently being consulted upon and if renewed, the approach to improving compliance with licence conditions in licensed properties will be strengthened and stronger penalties imposed upon the landlords of unlicensed properties. Encouraging Landlord accreditation and improving the rewards available for good landlords will complement this tougher enforcement stance. It would be useful to understand the particular concerns about student housing if this refers to purpose built accommodation rather than general needs housing which just happens to be occupied by students.
8	That the City Council: a) Calls on the new Vice-Chancellor of the University of Oxford to provide reinvigorated engagement in Oxford's housing sector by learning from the Cambridge model and providing new accommodation to house academics. b) Tasks the new Assistant Chief Executive with working closely with the University sector and encouraging a greater degree of input into city matters, including financial contributions where appropriate.	Agreed	This work is already in progress. The new assistant Chief Executive will help take this forward.
9	That the City Council builds on its commendable work on addressing fuel poverty by:	In part	Partially agreed. The Council has developed a fuel poverty model to identify areas of the City which are at greater risk of fuel poverty. This model can be used to target resources and grants to

	<p>a) Making a fuel poverty calculator available online that directs people in fuel poverty to contact the City Council for advice on what support they may be entitled to,</p> <p>b) Asking Trading Standards whether they would like the City Council to refer cases to them where an Energy Performance Certificate is required and whether they would be prepared to give the City Council any enforcement powers.</p>		<p>people in fuel poverty. We will increase our advertisement of the help that can be provided to reduce energy costs through the advice centres and the Council.</p> <p>The Council is due to begin taking enforcement against private landlords with EPC ratings of F and G, and this action is included in the Council's Financial Inclusion Strategy and we will undertake this work directly..</p>
10a	<p>That the City Council builds on its work with Oxford Clinical Commissioning Group and other health partners by:</p> <p>a) Supporting the delivery of more proactive health interventions in areas of multiple deprivations, such as contacting people who miss appointments,</p>	Agreed	<p>The City Council, Oxfordshire Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) and Public Health, have been working toward this in a number of ways:</p> <p>Some GP Practices use text messages to remind patients of upcoming appointments, where they have patients' mobile phone numbers. They also post messages in Practice waiting rooms to inform patients of the impact of missed appointments.</p> <p>In terms of health interventions, where there has been low uptake of NHS initiatives, such as screening programmes and health checks, some focussed work has been conducted by the CCG'S Equality and Access Team. This has included working with patients in some GP Practices to enable them to be booked into appointments.</p> <p>The CCG alongside Public Health and the City Council, has established multi-agency Community Partnership Health Groups, based in the city's key areas of deprivation. These help to support health promotion campaigns and activities at a local level. They have also drawn up Health Plans for each area, based on health indicator data, to identify the key issues and provide appropriate interventions and initiatives to tackle them.</p>

			The development and delivery of the Community Health Plans are supported by the CAN Breaking the Cycle of health Deprivation Working Group (including the CCG, Public Health and CAN staff).
10b	That the City Council builds on its work with Oxford Clinical Commissioning Group and other health partners by: b) Working towards the concept of pooled budgeting in areas where evidence suggests that this approach can improve health outcomes.	Agreed	Pooling of budgets is not specifically a City Council issue. However, the Executive Director for Communities and the Executive Board Member, Corporate Assets and Public Health are actively offering to provide City Council premises and other assets to promote better health outcomes. An example of the possibilities in this domain is the proposed use of the health space at the new Rose Hill Community Centre.
10c	That the City Council builds on its work with Oxford Clinical Commissioning Group and other health partners by: c) Utilising the City Council's assets (such as leisure centres) and the agencies we support to facilitate social prescribing, and encouraging more GPs to take up social prescribing.	Agreed	Agree, as above. In addition; the Head of Community Services is represented on the Oxfordshire University Hospital Trust, Public Health Steering Committee and on the Oxfordshire Clinical Commissioning NHS Health Inequalities Commission Steering Group. This is to ensure that Oxford City Council is well placed to identify opportunities for working with other agencies to deliver health promotion services. With reference to Social Prescribing: One Practice, which serves two regeneration areas in the city, has recently initiated a Social Prescribing project. The CCG's Equality and Access Manager has undertaken some research of models across the country. The findings will be presented to GP Leads and a decision will be made as to the potential of a county-wide Social Prescribing Project. This will also be considered for application at the new Rose Hill CC.
10d	That the City Council builds on its work with Oxford Clinical Commissioning Group and other health partners by: d) Working with partners to develop a single online point of access for multiple services in Oxford, including health, housing and social care.	Not agreed	There are a range of points where people can and should access information. It is important however to play our part in ensuring that all the agencies continue to work to improve information sharing and referral processes and to ensure that service signposting is appropriate. The voluntary and community sector have an important role to play in this and the City Council provides funding through its grant

			programme to a number of agencies providing advice, support, signposting and referral to health, housing and social care services.
11	That the City Council explores how factors around inequality and public health could be designed in to the planning and development of sites. These factors should include cycling and walking provision, the accessibility of parks, and the provision of a variety of housing within the street scene. Consideration should also be given to shaping new communities. For example, new communities should include a centre and shared open space.	Agreed	<p>This is already in hand. For example, the Barton development is considered to be an example of best practice in this regard. Public Health have also been asked to comment on planning applications with strategic implications for building sustainable communities that support health and help to promote exercise, such as the Northern Gateway master plan.</p> <p>A member of the City Council Planning Policy Team recently attended a Public Health England workshop aimed at improving collaboration between planning and health improvement professionals. Some of the issues raised at this workshop have fed into on-going scoping work that Public Health are undertaking to ensure that health considerations receive more prominence when planning decisions are made across all Oxfordshire authorities.</p>
12a	That the City Council: a) Assists in bringing about negotiations with local health, housing and social care commissioners and providers so that a county wide discharge policy for people experiencing homelessness can be adopted as per best practice guidelines	Agreed	There is an operational hospital discharge procedure in place, which provides client names and 48 hour notice of discharge to Housing Services. However, this procedure could be strengthened with a more strategic hospital discharge protocol agreed on a countywide basis with all key stakeholders. This would relate to care packages including a broader range of services, for example Hospital Trusts (specialist physical and mental health services) and adult social care. The City Council will try to facilitate the development of this further.
12b	That the City Council: b) Extends interventions aimed at supporting homeless people with complex needs (e.g. substance abuse and mental health issues), who are often excluded from accessing the services they need.	Agreed	Officers are already working with the Oxfordshire Clinical Commissioning Group, Public Health and providers to develop a suitable service for single homeless customers with complex needs, including when substance misuse limits effective treatment options for mental health. The Council is also part of a Complex Needs network which seeks to improve the access that

			people with complex needs have to current services. This aims to build on outcomes for people with the most complex needs through intensive support and a flexible systemic approach.
13	Oxford City Council is leading the way in defining, measuring and tackling fuel poverty and we recommend that the same priority should be given to the issue of food poverty. A part-time role should be created to tackle food poverty, which should involve facilitating the work of the not-for-profit and voluntary sector to maximise their impact, and developing a food poverty strategy for Oxford. This strategy should aim to replicate best practice established by Bristol to reduce food bank demand and increase access to good and affordable food across the city.	Not agreed	<p>The OSP Breaking the Cycle of Deprivation Group has been working with Good Food Oxford to see how this work can be taken forward.</p> <p>The Breaking the Cycle Group (including representatives from the Oxfordshire Clinical Commissioning Group and Public Health) funded Good Food Oxford to carry out community activities on Blackbird Leys, to introduce food poverty and healthy eating elements to the work that food oriented Community Action Groups already do within their local communities. This has proved to be extremely effective. The aim is to continue to work with Good Food Oxford and other partnerships to build the capacity of local communities.</p>
14a	<p>That the City Council:</p> <p>a) Identifies how it can provide a greater degree of funding security to Asylum Welcome. Consideration should be given to including their work within the remit of the Council's Community Grants commissioning programme, which awards funding for 3 years rather than annually. This will reduce Asylum Welcome's administrative workload and help to ensure that they remain viable over the medium term.</p>	Not stated	Noted. This recommendation will be considered as part of the annual review of the Council's grants programme in the budget round. We are in active discussions with Asylum Welcome and other charities in this area with regard to the refugee crisis and how we can assist them in making a fully effective response.
14b	<p>That the City Council:</p> <p>b) Explores whether it could provide low cost accommodation to third sector organisations by utilising unused capacity in Council-owned assets such as Community Centres.</p>	Agreed	<p>The Council supports and funds a number of voluntary and community groups, some of which have accommodation in City Council premises and some in the private rented sector. All registered charities are eligible for rate relief</p> <p>Reduced hire rates for the Town Hall are also available to</p>

			voluntary and community sector organisations.
15	<p>We strongly endorse the City Council's approach to combatting financial exclusion and recommend that the City Council:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Ensures that the Welfare Reform Team are fully and best deployed in order to provide greater assistance and proactively reach more people, particularly those moving on to Universal Credit, b) Moves towards implementing a 'single view of debt' in order to identify multiple debts owed to the Council, and where possible, consolidate these, c) Gives a high priority to continuing to protect the current level of funding for the advice sector over the medium term, d) Explores longer term funding options for a housing needs money advice caseworker, and evaluates the impact of this provision over time, e) Continues to work closely with CAB and other agencies to encourage the take up of unclaimed benefits. f) Aims to make full use of its Discretionary Housing Payments budget. 	Agreed	The Financial Inclusion Strategy supports this work.
16	That the City Council establishes a reliable directory of charities for Oxford, setting out the aims, principle client groups and types of relief provided. This will help to ensure that local charities have a greater awareness of what other charities do.	Not agreed	The OCVA have a register of Charities and are funded by the City Council, but if there are weaknesses in this register we will seek to rectify them with OCVA colleagues.
17	We recommend that the City Council continues to prioritise improving educational attainment in the city by:	Not agreed	The Council is currently working through the Oxford Strategic Partnership (OSP) to see if a stronger partnership approach to raising education attainment can improve attainment levels in the

	<p>a) Offering a new educational grant programme to which Head Teachers from schools serving deprived areas can apply. This programme would provide tangible output-based funding to reduce educational inequalities in city schools. The criteria for awards should be non-prescriptive but grants could be used to fund specific line items in School Improvement Plans focused on Pupil Premium and Special Educational Needs pupils, for example.</p> <p>b) Engaging with partners and considering whether it has a role in ensuring that eligible year 1 and 2 pupils are registered for the Pupil Premium so that their schools receive the additional funding they are entitled to.</p>		<p>city. An OSP Sub Group has been established to develop a set of actions for educational attainment improvement in the city. There have also been meetings with the head teachers of schools in the south of the City and discussions on how the regeneration of Blackbird Leys might contribute to the raising of attainment levels.</p> <p>The County Council has now established a Strategic Schools Partnership Education Commissioning Shadow Board. This Board is in the process of establishing the grant criteria for support. The City Council has representation on this Board. The aim is to ensure any activities funded/provided by the City Council which contributes towards education attainment is additional and complementary to the County Council Commissioning Strategy and Plan.</p> <p>The Council's financial and human resources are constrained and these recommendations are ones which would be difficult to fund within the known future budget envelope.</p>
18a	<p>That the City Council utilises skills within communities and works with partners to maximise every opportunity to provide employment and career paths for more residents living in areas of multiple deprivation, including by:</p> <p>a) Seeking to influence and improve the provision of targeted careers advice in schools, extending this to younger pupils (years 7-8), as well as offering mentoring into adulthood</p>	Not stated	<p>Skills, employment and career paths are not the statutory responsibility of the City Council. However, through the Leader, officers are working with the Oxfordshire Local Enterprise Partnership and the Oxfordshire Skills Board to improve services within the city.</p> <p>Oxfordshire County Council has established a service bringing together schools and businesses called O2i. This includes career advice, work placements and promoting apprenticeships. This work is overseen and monitored by the Oxfordshire Skills Board and information is circulated by the Policy and Partnerships Team Leader to the City Council Employment and Skills Group</p> <p>There is a cross City Council Employment and Skills Group, which meets to share information and to ensure services are coordinated. This group includes officers from the Economic</p>

			<p>Development, Communities and Neighbourhoods, Policy and Partnership, Welfare Reform Team and Human Resources.</p> <p>The City Council has undertaken a robust needs analysis of skills and employment issues. This is available in the link below.</p> <p>http://www.oxford.gov.uk/Library/Documents/Statistics/EmploymentAndSkillsSupplementaryPaperAug2014.pdf</p> <p>A review of services was undertaken and an action plan was developed to fill the gaps. This is set out in the Employment and Skills report August 2014. City Council activities include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Working with Business in Community to provide business links with secondary schools, mentoring and work placement opportunities. Currently the City Council is linked with Cherwell School. • The Youth Ambition Programme which aims to build the confidence and skills of young people and ease the transition between school and work. • The development of Employment and Skills Plans for key physical regeneration schemes, • Apprenticeships within city council services • Support to Job Clubs on estates • Influencing and supporting the delivery of European Structural Funding Programmes.
18b	<p>That the City Council utilises skills within communities and works with partners to maximise every opportunity to provide employment and career paths for more residents living in areas of multiple deprivation, including by:</p> <p>b) Extending the use of social clauses to create more and better opportunities for</p>	Not stated	<p>The City Council Skills and Employment Group ensure that the Employment and Skills Plans are linked into the Job Clubs that are based on estates. A recent Job Fair, arranged with Job Centre Plus, in Barton attracted over 400 potential job applicants and 20 businesses (mainly in the retail and construction sectors). Similar events will be rolled out to Rose Hill and Blackbird Leys. The Council's procurement policies are geared specifically to encouraging suppliers to offer training, apprenticeships and</p>

	young people. Clarity is required as to how the City Council will ensure that developers deliver social clauses.		guidance to young people.
18c	<p>That the City Council utilises skills within communities and works with partners to maximise every opportunity to provide employment and career paths for more residents living in areas of multiple deprivation, including by:</p> <p>c) Extending the offer of reduced fees for tutors to all Community Centres situated in areas of multiple deprivations. The City Council should also continue to make better use of Community Centres and promote them as vibrant local hubs.</p>	Agreed	Agreed for consideration as a part of the development of the Community Centre Strategy.
18d	<p>That the City Council utilises skills within communities and works with partners to maximise every opportunity to provide employment and career paths for more residents living in areas of multiple deprivation, including by:</p> <p>d) Maximising links with universities, private schools, the student hub and businesses to get more volunteer help for appropriate programmes. These opportunities could include coaching and mentoring to help vulnerable people into work, assisting young people to whom English is not a first language, and broadening access to resources such as arts provision.</p>	Agreed	<p>Agreed. City Council Officers have been represented on the European Structural Investment Steering group and helped shape the European Social Fund Strategy and proposals. This included funding for two NEET programmes (to support those who are NEET and those at risk of becoming NEET) and Building Better Futures Funding aimed at long term unemployed. The City Council has submitted an application to deliver the Building better Futures Programme.</p> <p>City Council Officers have been working with the County Council, Employment and Economy Team and Job Centre Plus to look at how teaching language services can be improved. The Oxford Community and Voluntary Alliance was commissioned to undertake a review, which identified that there is a range of good work being undertaken but that the sector needs improved coordination. Officers are currently in discussion with one of the colleges to see if they can take on this role, which has become even more important given the recently announced cuts in in this service.</p>

19	That the City Council calls on local employers to put an end to exploitative employment practices in the city. These practices include employers charging restaurant staff to wait tables, paying less than the minimum wage, and employing workers on zero hours contracts against their will.	Not agreed	If the Scrutiny Committee can provide evidence on the extent and distribution of such practices we will identify methods of securing improvements. More generally, the Council will continue to lead by example by offering good terms and conditions of employment to all staff including agency workers. Our contractors are required to commit to paying the Oxford Living Wage and we have encouraged employers across the city to adopt the Oxford Living Wage with some success. We will continue to lead by example and try and influence other employers in good employment practice through normal channels.
20	That the City Council continues to look to raise wages by: a) Creating a Living Wage Hub in Oxford based around the Oxford Living Wage. This should involve a programme of activities to promote the Oxford Living Wage, and a distinct logo that Oxford Living Wage employers are encouraged to display. Ideally these activities should be led by engaged citizens but they may initially require some officer resource. The Hub could also look at other related employment issues such as pay ratios. b) Identifying a public face of the Oxford Living Wage. This could be a member champion. c) Working constructively with the Living Wage Foundation in promoting Living Wage Week and seeking to raise wages and improve working conditions in Oxford, particularly in low paid sectors such as hospitality, health and social care.	In part	Partially agreed. The Council has already undertaken a number of initiatives including achieving Living Wage accreditation, campaigning in the city for other employers to adopt the Living Wage and speaking in support of the benefits of the OLW in various forums. We will continue to make use of the benefits of being a nationally accredited Living Wage Employer through Living Wage research, campaigns (such as Living Wage Week), etc. We will review the resource implications of the more extensive approach recommended in 20 a) and b).
21	That Oxford City Council is a major employer in the city, and recommend that the City Council continues to develop its own employment	Agreed	The Council is already progressing an action plan to improve its recruitment practices. This includes giving more attention to job descriptions, person specifications, selection testing which tests

	<p>practices through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) More flexible recruitment practices such as accepting CVs and more widespread use of assessment centres, b) An annual managed calendar of interventions targeting black and minority ethnic communities and other underrepresented groups, c) Better targeting of constructive feedback to unsuccessful applicants, d) Interactive and accessible recruitment webpages with guidance for applicants, e) Uplifting the salaries of lower paid staff at a higher rate than those of higher paid staff to ensure that the pay gap between them doesn't increase over time. 	<p>criteria more effectively than interviews alone, inviting CVs as part of the application process, etc. It is increasingly rare for a selection process to comprise only of an interview. We have also run initiatives such as targeting unsuccessful BME candidates to review their experience of the recruitment process, consider the shortlisting decisions, ensure they receive feedback, etc. We have an electronic recruitment system and a series of pages which include assistance for candidates in the application process and presenting the benefits of working for the Council. We have previously addressed the issue of low pay by introducing the Oxford Living Wage and deleting the lowest pay grades. Further consideration of low pay will feature in consultation and negotiation for a new pay deal to run after the current one expires (March 2018). Although recommendation 21 e) has generally been the case in recent years, no long term commitment can be made to it as our wage bargaining structures are not necessarily always going to be under our direct control.</p>
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