

Appendix 1 – Review of Initial Action Plan

THEME	TASK	TARGET/OUTCOME	STATUS OF ACTION
DEBT – Short Term	Agree revised outcomes with Advice Sector and draft revised Service Level Agreements(SLA's) for 14/15	Agree a set of outcomes which reflect the customers' needs and respond to challenges of Welfare Reform and increasing living costs.	Completed – Agreements are in place and being monitored.
	Map provision of emergency support available in the City to those in crisis (e.g. Foodbanks, grants, loans)	Ensure Council staff can refer people in crisis to appropriate emergency support. Understand the implications of any gaps and demand for services.	Completed – This document is a resource for Council staff and partners to refer client groups to the most appropriate outlet.
DEBT – Long Term	Monitor performance against SLA's, and use data to inform commissioning process for 15/16 to 17/18	Complete data sets in relation to outcomes agreed in SLA's (above)	Completed – Monitoring is underway, with the first quarter's data for the priority area of debt having been received.
	Map advice provision in City, with reference to services required under Localised Support Services Framework(LSSF)	Understand gaps in service provision which need to be addressed to deliver LSSF	Completed – DWP have departed from the LSSF in the rollout of Universal Credit. However pathways have been developed for anyone requiring support, though numbers are very low.
	Ensure Corporate Debt Recovery policy is embedded in debt collection processes	To ensure all Council debts are considered when making payment arrangements, introduction of single Income & Expenditure form for Council debts, and to ensure customers are referred for debt advice and budgeting support where appropriate. Work towards providing a single view of customer debts.	On Going– This action has been carried forward to the revised Action Plan.
	Work with Credit Unions to promote their services, and to inform the public about the dangers of unaffordable credit	Increase the number of Oxford residents who are saving with the Credit Unions.	Ongoing - An independent review of provision has been completed. The Council is currently considering its response to the recommendations. This action has been carried forward to the revised Action Plan.
	Ensure provision is made for providing basic bank accounts when retendering the Council's bank	Ensure the Council's provider of banking services has a commitment to providing basic bank accounts for those that require	Completed – Barclays is the new provider, and partnership work is being undertaken to enable Council officers to make referrals for customers.

	contract	them	
	Investigate the establishment of a citywide Financial Inclusion Partnership	Work with partners in the most effective way to ensure Financial Inclusion issues are affectively tackled.	Ongoing - This action has been carried forward to the new version of the Action Plan.
INCOME – Short Term	Review recommendations contained in CESI research on the local impact of Welfare Reform.	Determine new actions and amend actions within this plan to meet the challenges identified in the research.	Completed – Recommendations from this research have been included in the revised Action Plan
	Promote DHP's to Private Rented Sector(PRS) Tenants	Ensure there is a higher take up of support from the private sector compared to 2013/14, by targeting recipients likely to require support.	Complete – Expenditure on PRS customers doubled as a result of this work.
INCOME –Long Term	Train frontline staff to recognise indicators of financial exclusion	Customers correctly referred for internal or external support. Data gathered on extent of financial exclusion	Action Amended – It was envisaged that Contact Centre staff would deliver this action, however time pressures in the Contact Centre mean this isn't possible .Instead this action has been amended in the revised Action Plan and will be addressed by other frontline teams likely to come into contact with target groups.
	Roll out direct payment of Housing Benefit to all eligible working age tenants	Prepare tenants and the Council for introduction of Universal Credit, and identify tenants likely to be excluded from the direct payment element of Universal Credit	On Going– Most working age tenants have participated in the pilot, and new tenants are assessed for their ability to manage direct payment of their housing benefit.
	Deliver financial capability training to young people	Young people better informed to make decisions which impact on their financial wellbeing	On Going– Work is required to identify the young people who would benefit most from this action.
	Gain accreditation with Living Wage Foundation	Acting as a role model for businesses and other organisations in the City. Encourage that the Council's suppliers and contractors also gain accreditation.	Completed – As well as paying the Living Wage, the Council promotes payment of living wage through its supply chain.
	Identify local providers of affordable childcare	Range of providers identified to be used in assisting people moving into work	Completed – Used as a resource to help customers identify childcare provision.

	When reviewing related policies, ensure the aims of the Financial Inclusion Strategy are supported	Ensure the Council adopts a consistent approach to matters related to Financial Inclusion	On Going– Revenues & Benefits Programme Manager reviews new and updated policies in light of the FI Strategy
HOUSING – Short Term	Support tenants to downsize where Welfare Reforms mean their rent is unaffordable	Host further Mutual Exchange Speed Dating events. Facilitate more moves by providing financial support to people downsizing.	Completed – Two years of funding provided to Landlord Services to facilitate moves. The number of households affected by the Bedroom Tax has reduced from 956 in April 2013 to 609 in July 2015.
	Monitor & Review Discretionary Housing Payment policy	Ensure conditionality effectively supports tenants.	Completed – Regularly reviewed by Scrutiny and new policy adopted for 2015/16
	Programme of council housing energy efficiency and renewable energy works to be incorporated into Asset Management Strategy based on stock condition data	Target and prioritisation of stock according to energy efficiency and vulnerable residents. Rolling programme set, adapted according to available funding	In Progress - First phase of loft and cavity wall insulation currently being installed. Domestic solar PV has been rolled out. Action carried forward into updated Action Plan.
	Introduce a Tenant Ready Scheme	Ensure tenants are equipped with the skills to manage their tenancy, especially payment of rent.	Completed – This is provided by Crisis and Connections.
	Pilot project utilising thermal imaging to inform Housing Health & Safety Rating System	Poorly performing properties identified, and landlords informed how to make required changes.	Completed - Initial trial of around 20 properties completed. Officers have been skilled up to carry this work out in future.
	Roll out of Winter Warmth outreach project to help vulnerable old people access guidance and funding for affordable warmth	Future years dependent on resources available	Completed - 250 people reached and 426 engaged with Affordable Warmth network.
	Affordable Warmth grants - currently £25k/y to lever in additional funding.	Continue to use to lever in external funding to alleviate fuel poverty for Oxford households where possible.	Completed - Council is coordinating work to share data and access funding for local community groups. Affordable warmth training for groups and advice centres has also been offered.
HOU SIN G – Long	Programme of insulation, heating and ventilation improvements carried out within the Tower Blocks	Better insulated, ventilated properties that result in lower energy bills for residents	On Going – Carried out as part of the Great Estates programme.

refurbishment programme		
Pilot to change Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMO) licensing conditions to necessitate carrying out of recommended measures in Energy Performance Certificates rated F and G	Changes to HMO licensing researched, consulted on as necessary and implemented. Achieved by working with landlords supporting identification of good practice, and providing support where required.	Complete – Now part of new licence conditions.
Work with Affordable Warmth Network and Health Improvement Board to find a meaningful way to monitor the health impacts of fuel poverty across Oxford (and Oxfordshire)	A standard fuel poverty indicator with health indicators that enable monitoring of impacts of work around fuel poverty	Complete – Public Health Improvement Board have a new outcome measure looking at the number of interventions the Affordable Warmth Network have made, which have had a positive impact on fuel poverty.
Determine programme of insulation in housing stock, maximising available funding	Clarification of properties to be insulated in priority order, to be carried out as per available funding	Ongoing - This is a significant programme of work and has been carried forward into the new version of the Action Plan.
Investigate ways of minimising expenditure on energy for Council tenants	Reduce fuel bills for Council tenants.	Ongoing - Focus in 2014/15 was on tenants with pre-payment meters. Focus in 2015/16 will be delivering a programme of energy audits to tenants.
Continue to investigate new ways to maximise available funding for insulation and other measures across Oxford as available funding changes	Maximise funding for energy efficiency measures	Completed, although this is annual activity – Pursued via Green Deal and Energy Company Obligation (ECO) funding.
Use the Building Research Establishment Stock modelling and other data to find private rental areas most at risk of fuel poverty	Target residents in private rented sector in areas found to be most at risk of fuel poverty	Completed – Outreach work undertaken
Identify households covered by the new low income, high cost” definition of fuel poverty and give further consideration to low income, smaller homes that may not meet this classification but still be fuel poor	Ensure customers in fuel poverty are provided with the support to which they are entitled	Completed – Fuel Poverty model developed to identify areas of Oxford at greatest risk. This is already being used to target funding available for people in fuel poverty.

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	Energy strategy and training to be implemented for all housing staff with communications plan for external promotions	Ensure consideration of fuel poverty is embedded in all Housing services.	Completed – Staff are upskilled and able to consider issues of fuel poverty when dealing with other matters.
SKILLS – Short Term	Support customers to access digital services	As part of Channel shift strategy, ensure support is provided to assist customers in accessing and utilising digital services	On-going - Welfare Reform Team capturing data on digital access. Support also provided as part of Universal Credit rollout.
SKILLS – Long Term	Development of LA led pilot, and planning for LSSF	Extend scope of work to Private Rented Sector.	Completed – Project financed by European Social Fund delivered, and referral routes developed to support people migrating to Universal Credit.
	Develop the partnership network that was established in the LA led pilot, to include providers that can deliver bespoke training to provide clients with the skills needed for known vacancies	Maximise the opportunity for people with limited skills to move into employment.	Completed – Extensive partnership developed. This is being used to develop a proposal for European Structural Investment Funding channelled through the Local Enterprise Partnership to support the long term unemployed into work.
	Align work of Welfare reform team to that of the Job Clubs	Provide locally based, joined up support to people who need help accessing work.	On going – Successful relationship formed, and the Welfare Reform Team are now developing a bid with Aspire to continue and expand Job Club provision in the City.
	If bids to the European Social Fund are successful, ensure the funding is used to develop the work carried out by the LA led pilot	Ensure any additional resources are used consistently, and in support of this strategy	Completed – See linked item at the top of this section.

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