

Agenda Item 3

Scrutiny Project Scope – Oxford Living Wage

Review Topic	Implementing the Oxford Living Wage across Oxford
Lead Member	Councillor Mark Ladbrooke
Other Members	Councillor Angie Goff Councillor Dan Iley-Williamson Councillor Ben Lloyd-Shogbesan Councillor David Thomas
Officer Support and allocate hours	Scrutiny Officer support – approx. 2-4 days per month for up to 4 months (Mid-August – Mid-Dec). Additional support from other Council officers as required.
Background	<p>Oxford is a dynamic and successful city with relatively low long term unemployment. However, the cost of living is higher than almost anywhere else in the UK, and the minimum wage is not enough for an individual or family to avoid living in poverty with all the ill effects that has.</p> <p>The Council is committed to supporting social inclusion and ensuring that workers and their families can live free from poverty by paying the Oxford Living Wage (set at 95% of the London Living Wage) as a minimum to all at Council staff. Contractors and subcontractors are also encouraged to pay the Oxford Living Wage.</p>
Rationale	<p>The Scrutiny Committee prioritised a review focusing on promoting the Oxford Living Wage when agreeing their work plan for 2017/18.</p> <p>Members are concerned that significant parts of the local economy continue to pay low wages that do not reflect the particularly high costs of living in Oxford. It is hoped that a scrutiny review can help to drive forward work on promoting the Oxford Living Wage more widely, making it an effective local employment standard.</p>
Purpose of Review / Objective	<p>To consider how the Council can promote the implementation of the Oxford Living Wage (OLW) across Oxford. Key lines of inquiry are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>What more can the Council do internally to promote the OLW? Are there opportunities to strengthen encouragement to contractors, offer incentives to employers who pay the OLW, publicise the OLW in Your Oxford, etc.?</i> - <i>What more can the Council do to promote the OLW and make it unacceptable for employers in the city to not pay a living wage? Would a Kitemarking system be workable?</i>

Indicators of Success	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Wide and constructive engagement with stakeholders and experts that delivers a range of opinion. - The production of evidence-based report with agreed conclusions. - Interim findings are timed to coincide with Living Wage Week (5-11 November). - The majority of any recommendations are agreed and implemented. - Positive feedback from members, officers and witnesses. - Stimulation of a broader discussion about low pay in the city. - A heightened awareness of the human impacts of low pay and how employees can raise concerns and access support services. - Council reaffirms its commitment to work with partners to make Oxford a 'Living Wage City' where every worker is paid a living wage. - The production of a list of employers in the city who pay the OLW. - An uptake in the number of employers who pay a living wage. - A portfolio / member responsibility for promoting the OLW.
Out of scope	<p>Issues around the availability and affordability of housing in the city and issues related to pay inequality (e.g. gender pay gap), while relevant, will not be central to the review.</p>
Methodology/ Approach	<p>Evidence gathering could include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Inviting written evidence from low paid workers and members of the public via email and / or an open access online consultation; - Inviting written and / or verbal evidence from Council officers, key stakeholders and expert witnesses; - Considering what can be learnt from other local authorities; - Desk research / literature review.
Specify Witnesses / Experts	<p>The following</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Matthew Peachey, Economic Development Manager; - Amanda Durnan, Strategic Procurement and Payment Manager; - Bruce Thompson, Building Ops Manager; - Justin Thorne, HR Resourcing Business Partner; - TBC, Business Rates; - TBC, Communications Team; - Low paid workers earning below the Oxford Living Wage; - Workers who have benefited from being paid the OLW; - Representatives of the following groups based in the city: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o The Living Wage Foundation; o Low paid workers e.g. Unite the Union, USDAW; o Blackbird Leys Credit Union; o Anti-poverty campaign groups; o Business e.g. Oxfordshire Chamber of Commerce; o Large employers e.g. Oxford University Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust; o Small employers e.g. Covered Market traders; o Benefits advice agencies e.g. CAB; o Oxford University Students' Union (Living Wage Campaign); o Faith groups; o Community Associations; o Academics e.g. Prof. Danny Dorling or Mark Fransham.

Specify Evidence Sources for documents	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - ONS employment data. - Literature on low paid and the living wage. - Council documents e.g. motion to Council in November 2007, Report to CEB in May 2009. - Written submissions from members of the public and others - Press articles. 		
Site Visits	TBC		
Projected start date	11 July 17	Draft Report Deadline	24 Nov 17
Meeting Frequency	Monthly	Projected completion date	19 Dec 17

Draft outline of meetings

Meeting one – 1 August 2017
Scoping meeting to agree key lines of inquiry, witnesses and methods of engagement.
Meeting two – 12 September, 5pm
Evidence session 1
Meeting three – 3 October, 5pm (provisional)
Evidence session 2
Meeting four –17 October, 2pm (provisional)
Evidence session 3
Meeting five – 1 November, 5pm (provisional)
Meeting to reflect on evidence gathered and consider recommendations.
Meeting six –15 November (provisional)
Meeting to consider and approve a draft report for submission to the Scrutiny Committee and City Executive Board in December. The Panel may wish to do this via email.

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