

www.oxford.gov.uk



11

Submission to the Local Government Boundary Commission for England

Review of ward boundaries in Oxford

Preliminary stage: Council size

Part 1: Governance and Decision Making – How does the Council manage its business and take decisions across its full range of responsibilities?

Leadership

1.1 What kind of Governance arrangements are in place for the authority?

The Local Government Act 2000 introduced a requirement for local authorities to move to one of three new political management structures which included the separation of executive and non-executive arrangements. The objective was to deliver greater efficiency, transparency and accountability in the decision making process. The decision makers and senior officers were to be held to account in public by Overview and Scrutiny Committees.

Oxford City Council opted for the Leader and Cabinet model form of governance and set a strong and engaged scrutiny function.

The Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007 required all local authorities to review their Executive arrangements. The Council was required to review its arrangements by 31 December 2010 with any changes being implemented within three days.

The Council formally adopted the new Executive arrangements, namely the “Strong Leader” model form of governance on the 30 June 2010.

1.2 How many Executive Members are there?

There are 10 Executive Members as follows:-

- Corporate Strategy and Economic Development
- Finance, Asset Management and Public Health
- Housing
- Planning and Regulatory Services
- Culture and Communities
- Leisure, Parks and Sport
- Community Safety
- Customer and Corporate Services
- A Clean and Green Oxford
- Young People Schools and Skills

The Leader is supported by 2 Deputy Leaders, 1 of whom takes on the statutory role.

Full details of the Executive Member responsibilities are set out at **Appendix 1**.

<p>1.3 Describe how an executive member carries out his/her work on a day to day basis.</p>	<p>In addition to reading and researching reports, the day-to-day work includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ regular briefings with the heads of service within their portfolio and directors. ▪ meetings of the Executive ▪ leading on meetings with key partners and stakeholders ▪ involvement in internal panels, working groups and steering groups supporting specific projects/ work streams ▪ meetings of outside bodies ▪ ward work and surgeries ▪ attending community groups as and when requested within their specific area of responsibility ▪ responding to questions from members of the public and other councillors at Full Council and meetings of the Executive ▪ leading briefing sessions for councillors ▪ providing political leadership on the development of reports and recommendations as they come forward to the Executive for consideration ▪ responding to emails from officers seeking guidance ▪ dealing with media enquiries and social media supported by a communications team and providing a profile for the Council on issues. ▪ reading reports and documents
<p>1.4 To what extent are decisions delegated to executive members or are most decisions taken by the full executive? What is the volume of decisions taken? How many decisions are taken by officers?</p>	<p>All decisions are made collectively by the Executive. As a Strong Leader, the Leader can withdraw decisions from the Executive to make him/herself (this is made clear in our constitution) but in practice this does not happen.</p> <p>Executive members do not make single-member decisions, officers make all the day-to-day decisions under a detailed scheme of delegation.</p>

<p>1.5 Do executive (or other) members serve on other decision making partnerships, sub-regional or national bodies?</p>	<p>The Leader, Executive members and non-executive members are appointed to a wide range of bodies, some of which are national but many are local.</p> <p>All of these meet on a regular basis at varying intervals.</p> <p>In addition, Members also represent the Council on various outside bodies, details can be found at Appendix 2.</p> <p>In 2014 the Council agreed to be part of a Joint Executive Committee called the Growth Board. The Growth Board is made up of voting members from the Oxfordshire authorities and other non-voting partners such as the university and business. This was set to facilitate collaboration on economic development, strategic planning and growth.</p>
<p>1.6 Is the role of the executive member considered to be full time?</p>	<p>The role of the City Council, its ambitions and its challenges are significant and are known to be of national importance. The role requires a very significant time input by members but there is no full time requirement.</p> <p>The role of the Leader of the Council is particularly demanding and the current leader has recently decided to expand the Political Leadership Team to include two Deputy Leaders.</p> <p>Oxford and Oxfordshire are national drivers for economic growth and the demands that this places in terms of partnership working and innovation is significant across most portfolios.</p>
<p>Regulatory</p>	
<p>1.7 How does the Council discharge its regulatory functions? How many members are involved in committees?</p>	<p>The Council discharges its regulatory functions through the following committees:-</p> <p><u>Planning Committees</u></p> <p>There are 2 Area Planning Committees determining planning applications that fall within allocated wards and are not delegated to officers. They meet at least monthly with programmed overspill meetings each month.</p> <p>There are 2 call-in processes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • those applications delegated to officers (with some minor exceptions) - 4 members within the consultation period can call an application to an Area Planning Committee. • those applications that have been decided upon by an Area Planning

	<p>Committee - 12 members can call-in the decision for planning reasons (within 2 days of the minutes) for review to a Planning Review Committee.</p> <p>Area Planning Committees and the Planning Review Committee each have 9 members.</p> <p>Training for all members of Council on the planning function is compulsory every 2 years. During the non-compulsory year broader planning training is offered to all members.</p> <p>Chairs and Vice Chairs of planning committees are required to attend a briefing meeting shortly before each meeting.</p>
	<p><u>Licensing Committees</u></p> <p>There are 2 Licensing Committees:</p> <p>Licensing and Gambling Acts - which has 15 members and discharges responsibilities under the provisions of the Licensing Act 2003;</p> <p>General Purposes and Licensing - which has 10 members and discharges the licensing functions as detailed in the Council's constitution. In addition the members of these Committees also sit regularly in casework sub committees;</p> <p>All members of these committees are required to do compulsory training in support of their work both on committees and sub-committees</p> <p><u>Licensing Sub-Committee</u></p> <p>Licensing and Gambling Acts Committee sets a sub-committee of 3 or 4 members which meets infrequently to consider premises licensing applications</p> <p>General Purposes and Licensing Committee sets a subcommittee of 3 or 4 members to consider street trading and taxi licensing issues. This is a busy committee which meets every 6 weeks. Membership of this sub-committee is on a rotational basis with a consistent chair (one of two very experience councillors). In practice this means that most members of the parent committee attend a sub-committee about 3 times a year</p>

	<p><u>Audit and Governance Committee</u></p> <p>This comprises of 5 members and oversees the audit and corporate governance functions of the Council. This includes final accounts, treasury management, risk and governance functions.</p> <p>The committee also considers from time-to-time matters including the management and outcomes from complaints and the implementation of large internal projects where risks and issues have been identified.</p>
	<p><u>Standards Committee</u></p> <p>This comprises 7 city councillors plus 2 non-voting co-opted parish councillors. Its aim is to promote and maintain high standards of conduct by members and co-opted members, to advise on the Code of Conduct, grant dispensations, and deal with hearings held to determine whether a member or co-opted member has breached the Code.</p> <p>The committee also considers the training, both compulsory and non-compulsory, of councillors.</p> <p>They are supported by 3 Independent persons who support the Monitoring Officer in deciding if a Code of Conduct complaint should go forward for investigation.</p> <p><u>Appointments Committee</u></p> <p>This comprises of 5 members, one of which must be an Executive member. It recommends to Council the appointment of all statutory officers and the Chief Executive, appoints Directors and agrees the salaries of the Chief Executive and Directors.</p> <p><u>Disciplinary Committee</u></p> <p>This comprises of 4 members. Its role is to decide on disciplinary issues involving the Chief Executive, Directors, statutory officers and heads of service.</p> <p>In addition where discipline involves a statutory officer the committee must:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • screen issues to decide if they warrant investigation; • organise investigations and review the outcomes after speaking to the officer concerned;

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • consult Independent Persons on recommendations for discipline or dismissal; • to put into place decisions for discipline; • to recommend and refer matters of dismissal to Council;
<p>1.8 Describe the arrangements for the delegation of decisions in respect of regulatory functions? To what extent are decisions delegated to officers?</p>	<p>The Constitution sets out the delegation arrangements in respect of regulatory functions.</p> <p>The majority of decisions are made by officers under delegated powers.</p> <p>In the case of the Planning Committees, officers' powers to deal with planning applications are limited by exception. Appendix 3 outlines the requirements for committee decisions. Oxford is an historic city with many spatial planning challenges. Planning control decisions presented to committees are often complex with active engagement from the community and other statutory and interested groups. Planning Committee members' time commitment to understand and decide these issues is significant.</p>
<p>1.9 Is committee membership standing or rotating?</p>	<p>Committee membership is agreed each year and remains in place for the whole of the Municipal Year unless members resign.</p>

1.10 Are meetings ad hoc, frequent and/or area based? How are the chairs allocated?

During the 2016/17 Municipal Year, the following numbers of meetings were held:-

	Meetings held	Members on Cttee
Full Council (inc Annual Council and Extraordinary Council)	8	48
City Executive Board	11	10
Scrutiny Committee	10	12
Scrutiny Housing Panel	5	6
Scrutiny Finance Panel	5	4
*Scrutiny Shareholder Panel	1	5
Task and Finish Groups 3 in the year	18	Varies but at least 3
Audit and Governance	6	5
Planning Committees	27	9 on each
General Purposes and Licensing Committee	2	10
Licensing Subs	12	3 or 4
Standards	2	7
Appointments Committee	0	5
Disciplinary Committee	0	4
Member Briefing	10	All
Members ICT Steering Group	As needed	7

*The Scrutiny Shareholder Panel was only formed during 2016/17 and is expected to have more meetings in a full municipal year.

Additional meetings are timetabled should business require them.

Membership of committees is agreed annually ay Full Council. Chairs of committees and sub-committee members are elected by those bodies at their first meeting following Annual Council. The Scrutiny Committee and Panels are all actively engaged in the business of Council and the issues of priority for residents. Non-Executive members work outside of committees to research, take evidence and produce reports for the executive to consider. More than half of non-executive councillors are actively engaged in the scrutiny function.

<p>1.11 What level of attendance is achieved? Are meetings always quorate?</p>	<p>Level of attendance at committees can vary depending on the business being transacted and other factors such as holidays and sickness. However, the level of attendance is generally high and members always endeavour to provide substitutes should they not be able to attend.</p> <p>Committee meetings are always quorate and attendances are a matter of public record, available on the Council's website.</p> <p>In the case of Scrutiny meetings, they are also attended by relevant members of the Executive as and when required answering questions and giving evidence in support of scrutiny reviews and inquiries.</p>
<p>1.12 What future challenges will your executive members face?</p>	<p>Oxford City Council, in common with other councils, faces significant challenges in maintaining services in the face of reducing resources. The City Council has taken a number of strategic decisions to address this issue that are likely to put new burdens and challenges on Executive Board members going forward, particularly relating to the creation of a number of wholly owned companies which will carry out Council functions.</p> <p>For example, the City Council has set up a Housing Company to act as developer and manager of new social housing; it has also formed a number of companies to act as development joint ventures with partners from the private and educational sectors in the city to bring forward sites for development, including major housing and mixed use sites in the city centre. Even more significantly, the Council has recently decided to move its highly successful and growing Direct Services operation into a LATCO/Teckal corporate structure, to allow it to compete fully in the commercial sector.</p> <p>The Council's Executive Board are charged with the oversight of these companies as a Shareholder Committee representing the Council as the shareholder, a new and different role to that which they had previously carried out. With this responsibility will come new learning and training requirements, a need for understanding different accounting procedures, and acquiring a new form of working relationship with the providers of a large proportion of the Council's services.</p> <p>In addition to these specific new responsibilities, the increased importance of cross-boundary and inter-organisational co-operation places a growing responsibility on Executive Board members in many areas of work, including planning, environmental sustainability, support services and so forth.</p>

Demands on Time

1.13 Has the Council defined the role of councillors? Has the Council adopted arrangements for training and developing councillors and supporting them in their role?

The Council does not formally define roles or provide job descriptions for the roles of members. That does not mean to say that these roles are not known or understood in fact members, particularly senior members, play a very active role in providing political leadership and chairing and supporting committees. There is also a Member-Officer protocol which sets out what is expected of members in their relations with officers.

Non-executive members engage very actively in the scrutiny function.

The Council has a member training framework this includes:

- an induction pack issued at the point of election including all essential information to get going;
- an induction day for new councillors which includes introductions, basic information giving and the provision and training on ICT systems and devices;
- compulsory Code of Conduct and data protection training every year;
- compulsory planning training every other year;
- compulsory licensing training every year for those members sitting on these committees;
- a non-compulsory programme of training every year which includes a wide variety of subjects useful to members understanding of the council and its services;

All new councillors are linked with a “support officer” for the first 3 months of their term. This officer will support the members access and understanding of the council and get the most from engagement.

	<p>Every other year, to coincide with elections, service areas hold open morning/afternoons to allow members to meet officers and see first-hand services delivered.</p> <p>A programme of member briefing runs throughout the year allowing members to learn more about issues of local and national importance.</p> <p>.</p>
<p>1.14 Has the Council assessed how much time members spend on Council business?</p>	<p>No, no formal assessment has been made.</p>
<p>1.15 Do councillors generally find that the time they spend on council business is what they expected?</p>	<p>This is not assessed.</p>
<p>1.16 What is the extent of members representational role on and appointment to outside bodies? How many are involved in this activity and what is their expected workload?</p>	<p>Appendix 2 shows the extent to which members are engaged in outside bodies.</p> <p>Each year the council asks both the member and the outside body what their experience has been across a range of questions. With very few exceptions outside bodies report that members attend and contribute regularly.</p> <p>The responsibilities on these bodies vary as can be seen from the appendix. Some members sit in roles as trustees which requires a higher level of commitment.</p> <p>The extent of partnership working across Oxford and Oxfordshire is significant and broad. These partnership roles are mostly taken by senior members and require a large commitment of time both in preparation and attendance.</p> <p>In addition to those bodies members are appointed to formally by Council they also attend a</p>

	<p>wide range of other bodies: as school governing governors, charities, tenants' and residents' groups, community centres' management committees, neighbourhood forums, regeneration partnerships, parish councils, to name a few.</p>
<p>1.17 Does the Council have difficulty in retaining members or attracting new candidates?</p>	<p>The Council currently elects by halves. There has never been an unfilled vacancy on the Council. At any electoral event (programmed or a by-election) there are always four candidates, sometimes more.</p>
<p>1.18 Have there been any instances where the Council has been unable to discharge its duties due to a lack of members?</p>	<p>No.</p>
<p>1.19 Do members have an individual or ward budget for allocation in their area? If so, how is the system administered?</p>	<p>Members have a ward budget each year to spend on activities that benefit their ward. Accessing this money is via an administrative process that allows all members to be able to see and potentially "call-in" any requests made.</p> <p>In addition, in wards without a parish council or adopted neighbourhood plan, members receive a proportion of CIL yearly to spend in their wards. This is accessed via the same administrative process</p>

Part 2: Scrutiny of the Council, Outside Bodies and Others

2.1 What's the structure? How does it operate?

The structure of the Council's committee arrangements is set out at **Appendix 3**.

The Council operates the 'Leader and Cabinet' executive model. The Leader of the Council appoints a number of members to form the City Executive Board (the Council's Cabinet), and allocates portfolio responsibilities to them. The City Executive Board is collectively responsible for taking most key decisions concerning the running of the Council.

The Scrutiny Committee is a committee of non-executive members which is empowered and supported to publically hold the Executive to account. The Scrutiny Committee ensures that Executive decisions are subject to effective scrutiny in public, and seeks to promote open and transparent decision making and democratic accountability. To provide assurance that the Scrutiny Committee operates independently of the Executive and can effectively balance executive power, it is a constitutional requirement for Scrutiny to be chaired by an opposition member.

In addition to holding the Executive to account, Scrutiny independently commissions its own reports and conducts reviews into selected issues that affect the city or its people. The Scrutiny Committee sets an annual work plan which details all the issues and decisions that members have chosen to focus on. The Scrutiny Committee appoints to themed sub-committees (e.g. housing and finance panels) and time-limited review groups, which examine topical issues in depth over a series of meetings. The membership of Scrutiny panels and review groups is drawn from all non-executive members.

Scrutiny involves a range of stakeholders in its work, including Executive members, council officers, representatives of partner organisations and external 'expert witnesses'. It also provides a platform for public engagement.

Many members are also extensively involved in the work of regulatory committees.

<p>2.2 What is the general workload of Scrutiny Committees?</p> <p>Has the Council ever found that it has had too many active projects for the scrutiny process to function effectively?</p>	<p>All members are invited each year to contribute topics and issues for inclusion in the annual Scrutiny work plan. There are more suggestions for areas of work than resources available. These suggestions are objectively assessed against a criteria set by the Committee which helps Scrutiny members to prioritise effectively when agreeing the work plan.</p> <p>The Scrutiny Committee is advised that the organisation has capacity to support 10 committee meetings, 10 standing panel meetings and 3 review groups (or 15 standing panel meetings and 2 review groups).</p> <p>The Scrutiny Committee reviews the scrutiny work plan at each meeting so that it can be adjusted to take account of upcoming executive decisions, items referred to Scrutiny by Full Council and other topical issues that arise during the year. This provides an opportunity for the Committee to be made aware of any resourcing constraints and to adjust their work plan accordingly.</p> <p>The work of Scrutiny is summarised in an annual report to full Council. The annual report for 2016/17 is attached as Appendix 4.</p>
---	---

<p>2.3 How is its work programme developed and implemented? How many subjects are there at any one time? What's the time-span for a particular study?</p>	<p>As stated in 2.2 above, a work plan is agreed annually by the Scrutiny Committee based on suggestions from members, and can be adjusted at each committee meeting.</p> <p>During 2016/17 Scrutiny considered 75 items in total, of which 25 were executive decisions and 50 were other issues prioritised by the scrutiny members.</p> <p>The majority of these items will be considered at a single committee or panel meeting. Items delegated to Review Groups are the exception. Typically these issues will be considered in depth over 5-7 meetings in reviews that are spread over 3-4 months. Once the Committee has chosen a topic for detailed review, an initial scoping meeting will be held. A scoping document will then be presented to the Scrutiny Committee for agreement and will include information such as the resource requirement, meetings schedule and duration of the review.</p> <p>A copy of the Scrutiny work plan for 2017/18 is attached at Appendix 5.</p>
<p>2.4 Are members involved in scrutinising external issues?</p>	<p>Yes, members scrutinise external issues. Examples from the 2016/17 scrutiny work plan (Appendix 5) include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Devolution plans for Oxfordshire (detailed review); • Proposals for a workplace parking levy and congestion charging scheme; • Health inequalities; • Credit union services; • The local impacts of Brexit; • University plans to provide student and key worker accommodation

	<p>Council also appoints members to external scrutiny bodies such as Thames Valley Police and Crime Panel and Oxfordshire Joint Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee.</p>
<p>2.5 When not in scrutiny meetings what activities are members expected to undertake?</p>	<p>Members are expected to read meeting paperwork and may also wish to conduct research, attend training sessions, briefings, seminars and site visits.</p> <p>Members in leadership roles (e.g. the Chair and Vice Chair of Scrutiny and Panel Chairs) will also participate in pre-meetings, sign-off scrutiny reports for submission to the Executive and attend meetings of the City Executive Board to present their recommendations.</p> <p>Members will also carry out any other work relating to their ward area and any other committees they are appointed to.</p>
<p>2.6 How will the role of the scrutiny member change? What are the emerging issues and trends?</p>	<p>Scrutiny has an important role to play in challenging Executive decision making, ensuring that non-executive members continue to be involved in the decision-making process. Review Groups will continue to be arranged to allow non-executive members the opportunity to gain a better understanding of matters of interest or importance to the Council and to assist in policy development.</p> <p>The most significant emerging issue that Scrutiny is adapting to is the establishment of new Council-owned companies. These companies are separate legal entities that are operationally independent of the Council. Scrutiny has no legal powers to involve itself in company business but it can hold the Executive to account for the decisions taken by the City Executive Board as shareholder. These new delivery models create new governance dynamics and relationships that need to be understood.</p> <p>A new Scrutiny protocol for Council-owned companies has been established to provide guidance to members and officers. The Scrutiny Committee has created a new Scrutiny Shareholder Panel to scrutinise Executive decisions taken by the Council as shareholder of its companies. These arrangements will need to be embedded over the coming years.</p>

<p>2.7 What kind of support do scrutiny members receive?</p>	<p>Scrutiny members are supported by a dedicated Scrutiny Officer within the Committee and Member Services Team. The Scrutiny Officer's role includes providing policy, organisational and procedural advice to Scrutiny members, co-ordinating the Scrutiny work plan, project-managing Scrutiny reviews, liaising with witnesses and the Executive, and producing reports to the Executive and Council. New Scrutiny members are offered an overview of the Council's Scrutiny function.</p> <p>The work of Scrutiny is also supported by senior officers who produce reports, attend meetings to answer questions and support Review Groups. Scrutiny Committee meetings are also supported by a Committee and Member Services Officer, who will produce the agenda, clerk the meeting and produce minutes.</p> <p>The Committee and Member Services Team co-ordinates an annual programme of Member Training, which is based on member input and feedback. In 2015/16 this included non-compulsory training on the Council's governance arrangements, an overview of the Council's finances and chairing skills, which Scrutiny members were encouraged to attend.</p>
---	--

Part 3: Representational Role: Representing Electors to the Council

<p>3.1 Has the representational role of councillors changed since the council last considered how many elected members it should have?</p>	<p>No. While the population (and therefore electorate) has risen since the last periodic review the representational role of members hasn't changed and we are happy that that the total number of members remain unchanged.</p>
---	--

3.2 In general terms, how do members carry out their representational role with electors? Do members mainly respond to casework from constituents or do they have a more active role in the community?

Members undertake the following activities to carry out their representational role with electors:

- represent individual residents and local organisations undertaking casework on their behalf;
- represent ward interests within and outside the Council;
- advocate for the Council in the ward and its communities;
- communicate in the community on Council strategies, policies, services and procedures;
- liaise with Executive members, other Council members, Council officers and partner organisations to ensure that the needs of local communities are identified, understood and supported;
- promote tolerance and cohesion in local communities;
- sit on outside bodies as a representative of the Council, ensuring that the Council's interest are maintained, and the working arrangement between the Council and the organisation is developed in a coordinated manner;
- sit on Partnership meetings to champion the Council's interests.

In addition to responding to casework from constituents, many members are also pro-active in the community, whether it be door-to-door canvassing or using social media and email to communicate with constituents. This pro-active way of working brings its own casework.

<p>3.3 How members engage with constituents? Do they hold surgeries, public meetings, use IT etc?</p>	<p>There is no hard and fast way in which members engage with their constituents, but by way of example, some are detailed below:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • door-to-door canvassing; • production of e-bulletins; • e-mail communication to constituents; • social media, i.e. Twitter, Facebook etc.; • blogging; • hard copy newsletters; • community meetings; • surgeries; • street surveys;
<p>3.4 How do members generally deal with casework? Do they pass on issues directly to staff or do they take a more in depth approach to resolving issues?</p>	<p>The process for dealing with casework varies. Some Members will have the experience, skills and knowledge to resolve constituents' issues, whereas others will refer issues directly to staff.</p> <p>The Council has produced a Service Standard for elected members which lists contact details and points of escalation for each Council service and sets expectations in terms of response times, which are monitored quarterly (see Appendix ??).</p> <p>Some members research complex casework enquiries to identify national/professional guidance and/or best practice in other authorities. Information gained from casework can generate questions and motion to Full Council or requests for work to be included in the</p>

	<p>Forward Plan for Scrutiny.</p> <p>Experienced members also mediate between disputing residents.</p>
<p>3.5 What support do members receive in discharging their duties in relation to casework and representational role in their ward?</p>	<p>Please see response to 3.4 above.</p> <p>Members are responsible for managing their own case work and the organisation will support them by providing timely responses to queries, as per the Service Standard.</p> <p>Members also receive some limited support in terms of their representational role, for example support with advertising promoting and advertising surgeries (not all members hold surgeries).</p>
<p>3.6 Has the Council put in place any mechanisms for members to interact with young people, those not on the electoral register or minority groups or their representative bodies?</p>	<p>As a university city, the Council (officers) regularly meets with the University of Oxford, representatives from its colleges and Oxford Brookes University. We also liaise with both universities' students' unions to discuss the engagement of the students in electoral registration (particularly following the introduction of Individual Electoral Registration).</p> <p>We are developing systems with the County Council to enable information on attainers (future voters) to be identified so they can be encouraged to get registered.</p> <p>The Council holds an annual Town Hall Takeover Open Day providing a civic talk and tour. Members of the public can hear the history of the Council Chamber, the Town Hall, the civic regalia, hold a debate in the Council Chamber on contemporary issues and meet with the Mayor in the Mayor's Parlour.</p> <p>The City Council provides officer time for a Youth Partnership Board (YPB), which is chaired by an Oxford city secondary school head teacher. This feeds into and supports the ongoing strategic delivery of the Children's Trust Board and the Oxfordshire Strategic Partnership. Members include: the City and County Councils, business representatives, Thames Valley Police, health and representatives from the voluntary and charity sector.</p> <p>The City Council's Policy and Partnership Team Manager champions children's safeguarding and sits on the Children's Trust Board, alongside an Executive Board Member for Young</p>

People, Schools and Public Health whose remit, as set out in the Council's Constitution, is to act as political lead for a number of issues, not least engaging with children and young people.

Our Youth Ambition Programme works to build meaningful relationships with disadvantaged young people aged 10-21 years old, (or up to 25 if they have physical or learning difficulties), who are from Oxford's regeneration areas. We engage with young people through youth voice activities, youth clubs, multi-sports sessions and work in a variety of settings. We provide a free four week summer activity programme for young people in two of our localities with highest need. Youth Ambition works hard to engage with girls, BAME, LGBTQ and young people with disabilities and are extending our work to reach more young people in the latter two groups. We monitor the attendance of diversity groups for these Youth Ambition Programmes and ensure they have a diverse range of role models running our activities. We also work in partnership with other voluntary, community and statutory organisations. Part of this work is our Cultural Education Partnership (CEP), chaired by our Arts Development Manager, works with local schools, voluntary organisations and the County Council to develop arts and culture projects. Both city and county councillors attend these events and interact with the young people. These events are always popular and successful, with over 50 organisations in attendance last year.

The Electoral Services Team has worked with Councillors to encourage members of minority groups to register to vote and become elected members. This has included working with our City's Mental Health Champion on increasing registration for people with mental health problems and through a programme of events designed to mark 100 years of Women's Suffrage.

As governors of local schools, Members interact with young people in their communities/wards.

As trustees of local charities, community centres and leisure services' user groups, members continually work to increase participation in the City Council's services and to work with

	<p>young people to find out how local provision – including playparks and green spaces – can best fit their needs.</p>
<p>3.7 Are members expected to attend meetings of community bodies such as parish councils or resident associations? What is the level of their involvement and what role do they play?</p>	<p>There is no expectation but some members do attend parish council meetings for their ward where these exist (the majority of the city is unparished). The level of involvement is whatever they wish to offer and what the parish council will allow.</p> <p>Most members also attend resident and tenant association meetings, and meetings of the former's executive or working groups.</p> <p>In recent times members have been involved with the formation and running of neighbourhood planning forums. This can involve working with the steering group to offer advice, assisting with character assessments and facilitating communication between the Forum and the Council.</p> <p>Another example is friends of parks groups. Work here can include advice on funding opportunities, help formulating strategic plans for the parks and taking up issues with relevant parties.</p>