

Appendix 1 – City Executive Board response to recommendations of the Scrutiny Committee made on 4 December 2018 concerning the Westgate Centre.

Draft response provided by the Board Member for Culture and City Centre

Recommendation	Agree?	Comment
Recommendation 1: That CEB considers what further opportunities are available to promote and encourage the take up of the Oxford Living Wage among employers located in the Westgate Centre.	Yes	Agree that it would be wrong simply to focus on Westgate and that there should be a campaign to promote the OLW across Oxford and across a range of employment sectors.
Recommendation 2: That CEB carries out a survey of the 125 retailers in the Westgate Centre to understand how many are paying the Oxford Living Wage as a minimum to all their staff.	No	Recommendation 1 is a higher priority and we need to promote good practice amongst employers first of all. Surveys can be costly and may not achieve anything given that the City Council has no powers of enforcement.
Recommendation 3: That CEB engages with local retailers in the wider city to understand where improvements to the public realm are most needed, and that these are incorporated into the City Council's scheme of works.	Yes	This has already started to happen through the City Centre Taskforce. We are looking to strengthen our City Ambassadors team and their enforcement powers. Improved public realm is also likely to be a key feature of a BID, if this comes forward.
Recommendation 4: That CEB carries out a survey of retailers in secondary retail areas in the City (outside of the city centre) to understand what impact the redevelopment of the Westgate Centre has had on local businesses.	In part	It would be useful to have this information, and to look at ways in which we can boost secondary shopping centres in the way we have supported Covered a Market traders. However, it will be difficult to establish exactly what the impact of Westgate is on the shopping areas given that each is affected by a variety of different factors, such as roadworks and car parking which will be different in each area. Officers have very recently undertaken a shopfront frontage survey of occupancy levels in the district centres (November 2018) so recent data is available. This information could be supplemented by discussion with any local or neighbourhood trading associations to get an understanding of how trading conditions in those locations are evolving.

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