

Appendix 2 a): Cabinet Responses to Scrutiny recommendations

13 November CABINET

Community Land Trusts

<i>Recommendation</i>	<i>Agree?</i>	<i>Comment</i>
1) That the Council will, when publicising and raising awareness of Community Led Housing, take steps to ensure that the barriers to demographic groups with less exposure to the concepts of communal living, particularly social housing tenants, are identified and addressed, and to ensure that these groups are equally equipped to understand the benefits of and to participate in the opportunities afforded by Community Led Housing.	Agreed	In the nature of the projects being “community led”, we must let the hub and CLH groups take the lead on this, i.e. we will promote interest in their model(s) by highlighting and distributing their publicity.
191 2) That the Council will, in identifying tenants with the values, skills and motivations suited to community living, give the Oxfordshire Community Land Trust a formal role in the selection process.	Partial	As a Council we have a duty to ensure housing needs are met, and we will not give any provider a role in selection that could risk the “cherry-picking” of prospective tenants. I expect, however, that agreement can be reached on the CLH groups having an important advisory role.

Workforce Equality Report

<i>Recommendation</i>	<i>Agree?</i>	<i>Comment</i>
1) That consideration is given to the suitability of the Council’s current policy in regards to BAME and female representation on officer-led recruitment panels, particularly with reference to the recruitment of heads of service.	Agree	
2) That when making appointments to Director and Head of Service level that the Council expressly shares its expectation to relevant recruitment agencies that shortlists will include women and BAME candidates.	Agree	

3) That all managers, particularly senior managers, be given structural discrimination training	Agree	Care will be required to avoid duplication with existing training
4) That briefings on current outreach and employment opportunities be provided to civic office holders, with details to include i) the support available to BAME groups to make applications to work at the Council, ii) upcoming job fairs and other events, and iii) upcoming apprenticeship and graduate placements	Agree	
5) That the Council extends the number of targeted BAME-focused careers fairs to reach different BAME communities	Agree	
6) That Oxford Direct Services is held to the same equality standards as the Council, and that it should make regular reports on actions taken towards and progress against equality goals to the shareholder	Agree	
7) To investigate the reasons for the high rate of non-disclosure over sexual orientation, and consider whether as part of that work to engage with the Stonewall Workforce Equality Index.	Agree	
192 8) Before new census data are released learning on which approaches are and are not successful in attracting BAME staff is captured to inform recruitment strategies.	Agree	

19 December CABINET

Universal Credit

<i>Recommendation</i>	<i>Agree?</i>	<i>Comment</i>
<p>1) To review the Council's Discretionary Housing Payments Policy from a needs-based perspective and is prepared to fund from general reserves any necessary top-ups beyond the Government grant figure, up to the permitted total.</p> <p style="text-align: right; vertical-align: middle;">193</p>	Partially	We are happy to review the DHP policy to ensure that it continues to follow the current approach, which is based on the customer need for support. In order to mitigate any potential overspend, the Council will apply for approval from the MHCLG for funding of DHP expenditure in relation to Council tenants by the HRA. Any other overspend would need to be met initially from general reserves in this financial year, however this position is not sustainable going forward and therefore the DHP policy may require wider review or alternatively provision would need to be made for the increased expenditure within the Council's budget.
<p>2) That should a needs-based analysis demonstrate a need for Discretionary Housing Payments above the grant funding total, for Cabinet to write to central government to lobby for a higher grant.</p>	Yes	Current policy is based on a needs analysis. Due to changes to Welfare Reform, customers are now having to meet their rental liability from reduced benefit payments, hence the need for the DHP spend. Consequently given this position, and reduction in DHP funding over recent years then Officers can lobby Central Government for a higher grant for 2020/21 onwards.

Draft Corporate Strategy

<i>Recommendation</i>	<i>Agree?</i>	<i>Comment</i>
<p>Recommendation 1: That Council makes the following amendments to its draft Corporate Strategy:</p> <p>i) Clarify to readers the difference between and reasons for changing from the existing reporting system to the use of bespoke business plans</p>	Yes	A number of changes to the document have been made to reflect the recommended changes, which are now 'live' as part of the public consultation document.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ii) Increase the emphasis on the drive to reduce inequalities which underpins the actions within the strategy iii) Review the suitability of references to residents, customers and citizens within their specific contexts iv) Add the following outcome to the Partner section of the Inclusive Economy Outcomes table: 'Local organisations adopt practices which support an inclusive economy and recognise the social value implications of their business decisions.' v) Reference the Council's success in engaging its residents in policy-making and its commitment to continuing to do so vi) Include reference to the 'Oxford model' 		
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