

To: Cabinet
Date: 24 January 2024
Report of: Climate and Environment Panel
Title of Report: Retrofit

Summary and recommendations	
Purpose of report:	To present Panel of the Scrutiny Committee recommendations for Cabinet consideration and decision
Key decision:	No
Scrutiny Lead Member:	Councillor Alex Hollingsworth, Panel Chair
Cabinet Member:	Cllr Anna Railton, Cabinet Member for Zero Carbon Oxford and Climate Justice
Corporate Priority:	Pursue a Zero Carbon Oxford
Policy Framework:	Council Strategy 2020-24
Recommendation: That the Cabinet states whether it agrees or disagrees with the recommendations in the body of this report.	

Appendices	
Appendix A	Draft Cabinet response to recommendations of the Scrutiny Committee

Introduction and overview

1. The Climate and Environment Panel met on 29 November 2023 to consider a Scrutiny-commissioned item on Retrofit. It was recommended that the Panel receive a presentation followed by an opportunity for discussion; and agree any recommendations.
2. The Panel would like to thank Councillor Anna Railton (Cabinet Member for Zero Carbon Oxford and Climate Justice) and Tina Mould (Head of Sustainability) for attending the meeting to present and answer questions.

Summary and recommendations

3. Councillor Anna Railton, Cabinet Member for Zero Carbon Oxford and Climate Justice delivered a presentation which set out an overview of issues including

FutureFit Oxford and Pioneering Places, on which the Council was anticipating a decision on grant funding imminently; Clean Heat Streets; Planning (permitted development) and Air Source Heat Pumps; the Council's Retrofit campaign; Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund; and retrofit of the Council's property portfolio.

4. The Panel asked a range of questions, including questions relating to the technical complexity of retrofit and how it could be demystified to encourage public engagement and uptake; promotion of and response to the Council's Retrofit campaign; community retrofit schemes; lessons learned from retrofit undertaken by the universities on listed buildings; and use of solar tiles.
5. During discussion, the Panel noted that the aim of the Council's Retrofit campaign was to make the topic of retrofit and the options available more easily digestible by the public; the Panel was interested in how information could be disseminated simply at scale to encourage retrofit uptake at scale. The Panel also recognised the importance of two-way communication in relation to retrofit; and that it would be useful for the Council to maintain a list of community groups and areas in the city where residents were interested in community retrofit measures, so that opportunities could be shared.

Recommendation 1: That the Council, through its current Retrofit campaign and any future initiatives, ensures a focus on simplification and demystification of retrofit so that the options and processes are easily digestible by the public – thus encouraging uptake at scale.

Recommendation 2: That the Council ensures an emphasis on two-way communication in relation to retrofit and maintains a list of interested community groups and areas of the city where residents are interested in community retrofit schemes, so that relevant information, intelligence and opportunities can be shared.

6. The Panel also discussed the possibility of the Council sharing a list of suppliers and/or installers of retrofit with residents via its communication channels. The Panel was clear that any list should not act as an accreditation or 'stamp of approval' from the Council for various suppliers, as this was outside the remit of the Council and any supplier issues could damage the Council's reputation, but simply sharing information about which suppliers are in the market (as other councils such as Cambridge and Bath had done).

Recommendation 3: That the Council compiles a list of local retrofit suppliers/installers to share publicly so that residents can see which suppliers are in the retrofit market.

Report author	Alice Courtney
Job title	Scrutiny Officer
Service area or department	Law and Governance
Telephone	01865 529834

e-mail

acourtney@oxford.gov.uk

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