OXFORDSHIRE
COUNTY COUNCIL
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Working for you

County Council

20 March 2012

Agenda

Declarations of Interest

This note briefly summarises the position on interests which you must declare at the meeting. Please refer to the Members' Code of Conduct in Part 9.1 of the Constitution for a fuller description.

The duty to declare …
You must always declare any "personal interest" in a matter under consideration, i.e. where the matter affects (either positively or negatively):
(i) any of the financial and other interests which you are required to notify for inclusion in the statutory Register of Members' Interests; or
(ii) your own well-being or financial position or that of any member of your family or any person with whom you have a close association more than it would affect other people in the County.

Whose interests are included …
"Member of your family" in (ii) above includes spouses and partners and other relatives' spouses and partners, and extends to the employment and investment interests of relatives and friends and their involvement in other bodies of various descriptions. For a full list of what "relative" covers, please see the Code of Conduct.

When and what to declare …
The best time to make any declaration is under the agenda item "Declarations of Interest". Under the Code you must declare not later than at the start of the item concerned or (if different) as soon as the interest "becomes apparent".
In making a declaration you must state the nature of the interest.

Taking part if you have an interest …
Having made a declaration you may still take part in the debate and vote on the matter unless your personal interest is also a "prejudicial" interest.

"Prejudicial" interests …
A prejudicial interest is one which a member of the public knowing the relevant facts would think so significant as to be likely to affect your judgment of the public interest.

What to do if your interest is prejudicial …
If you have a prejudicial interest in any matter under consideration, you may remain in the room but only for the purpose of making representations, answering questions or giving evidence relating to the matter under consideration, provided that the public are also allowed to attend the meeting for the same purpose, whether under a statutory right or otherwise.

Exceptions …
There are a few circumstances where you may regard yourself as not having a prejudicial interest or may participate even though you may have one. These, together with other rules about participation in the case of a prejudicial interest, are set out in paragraphs 10 – 12 of the Code.

Seeking Advice …
It is your responsibility to decide whether any of these provisions apply to you in particular circumstances, but you may wish to seek the advice of the Monitoring Officer before the meeting.

If you have any special requirements (such as a large print version of these papers or special access facilities) please contact the officer named on the front page, but please give as much notice as possible before the meeting.

OXFORDSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL
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To: Members of the County Council

Notice of a Meeting of the County Council

Tuesday, 20 March 2012 at 10.00 am

County Hall, Oxford OX1 1ND

Joanna Simons
Chief Executive   March 2012

Contact Officer: **Deborah Miller**
                                 Tel: (01865) 815384; E-Mail:deborah.miller@oxfordshire.gov.uk

In order to comply with the Data Protection Act 1998, notice is given that Item 3 will be recorded. The purpose of recording proceedings is to provide an *aide-memoire* to assist the clerk of the meeting in the drafting of minutes.

Members are asked to sign the attendance book which will be available in the corridor outside the Council Chamber. A list of members present at the meeting will be compiled from this book.

The civic party will process into the Council Chamber at 9.58 am.

AGENDA

1.   **Minutes** (Pages 1 - 6)

         To approve the minutes of the meeting held on 10 February 2012 (**CC1**) and to receive information arising from them.

2.   Apologies for Absence

3.   Declarations of Interest - see guidance note

Members are reminded that they must declare their interests orally at the meeting and specify (a) the nature of the interest and (b) which items on the agenda are the relevant items. This applies also to items where members have interests by virtue of their membership of a district council in Oxfordshire.

4.   Appointments

To make any changes to the membership of the Cabinet, scrutiny and other committees on the nomination of political groups.

5.   Petitions and Public Address

6.   Oxfordshire County Council Corporate Plan 2012/13 - 2016/17
(Pages 7 - 38)

The Council's Medium Term Corporate Plan 2012/2013-2016/17 (**CC6**) sets out the challenges facing the County Council , the rationale for our objectives, and identifies the priority and activities on which we will focus.

The approach set out in last year's directorate business strategies and the overarching Corporate Plan continue to provide the foundations for our strategy. The next twelve months will therefore be the second year of delivering the four year plan we set out last year.

The Strategy & Partnerships Scrutiny Committee reviewed the draft Plan and submitted comments to the Cabinet, who approved the draft on 17 January 2012.

A summary of the key elements of the Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) will be included once the Council has approved the budget, and the MTFP will form an annex to the plan.

The Cabinet RECOMMENDS Council to approve the Corporate Plan subject to the inclusion of a summary of the Medium Term Financial Plan and any changes in the text approved by the Chief Executive after consultation with the Leader of the Council.

7.   Director of Public Health Annual Report (Pages 39 - 76)

Council is RECOMMENDED to receive the report and note the recommendations.

recycled paper

8.   Pay Policy (Pages 77 - 98)

The Localism Act 2011 requires all councils to agree and publish a pay policy statement by the end of financial year 2011-12. The pay policy statement must as a minimum include details of the Council's policy on the remuneration of its chief officers and of its lowest paid employees. It must also give details of the relationship between the remuneration of its chief officers and the Council's other officers. The Pay Policy Statement at (**CC8**) Annex 2 brings together current Oxfordshire County Council policies into one document. It fulfils the requirements set down by the relevant legislation and codes. The report also proposes that a Remuneration Committee be established to make recommendations to the Council on future pay policy statements.

The Council is RECOMMENDED to approve:

(a)   the current Pay Policy Statement at Annex 2 to this report.

(b)   approve the creation of the Remuneration Committee as set out in paragraph 13 of the report which will make recommendations to Council regarding future Pay Policy Statements.

9.   Local Authority Standards (Pages 99 - 102)

At its meeting in December 2011, the Standards Committee gave initial consideration to the standards implications of the Localism Act. At that time, the Committee was minded to recommend Council to retain a standards committee under the new regime. However, the Committee met on 5 March 2012 to consider the implications of the Act in more detail and is now making specific recommendations to full Council (**CC9**) about the arrangements for resolving local complaints against members.

The Standards Committee RECOMMEND Council that:

(a)   a Standards Committee is not appointed under the Localism Act 2011;
(b)   The Audit Committee be renamed as the Audit & Governance Committee and its terms of reference expanded to include overview of member standards;

(c)   a member-officer working group be appointed to enable consideration of standards complaints against members of the Council reporting to the Audit & Governance Committee;

(d)   The Monitoring Officer to submit for Council's approval an appropriate procedure for the handling of complaints.

recycled paper

10. Equalities Policy and Objectives - Equality Policy 2012-2017
(Pages 103 - 136)

Report by Head of Law & Governance (**CC10**).

The Equality Policy 2012-2017 sets out how the Council is approaching its responsibilities for ensuring that all residents in Oxfordshire have fair access to services and equal life chances. It also demonstrates how the Council is meeting the requirements placed on public bodies under the Equality Act 2010, including setting equality objectives for the next four years.

A draft of the policy has been out for public consultation since January, and the final policy has been amended to reflect feedback from internal and external stakeholders.

To fulfil our legislative requirements, the final policy will be published by 6 April 2012, and progress in implementing it will be monitored and reported as part of the council's overall performance management arrangements.

The Cabinet RECOMMENDS Council to receive the report.

Pre-Meeting Briefing

There will be a pre-meeting briefing at County Hall on **Monday 19 March 2012 at 10.15 am** for the Chairman, Vice-Chairman, Group Leaders and Deputy Group Leaders

recycled paper

OXFORDSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

MINUTES of the meeting held on Friday, 10 February 2012 commencing at 10.00 am and finishing at 4.10 pm.

Present:

Councillor Patrick Greene – in the Chair

Councillors:

Don Seale	John Goddard	Susanna Pressel
Alyas Ahmed	Janet Godden	Anne Purse
M. Altaf-Khan	Tim Hallchurch MBE	G.A. Reynolds
Alan Armitage	Pete Handley	David Robertson
Lynda Atkins	Jenny Hannaby	Rodney Rose
Marilyn Badcock	Tony Harbour	John Sanders
Mike Badcock	David Harvey	Larry Sanders
Maurice Billington	Steve Hayward	Bill Service
Norman Bolster	Mrs J. Heathcoat	Chip Sherwood
Ann Bonner	Hilary Hibbert-Biles	C.H. Shouler
Liz Brighouse OBE	Ian Hudspeth	Roz Smith
Iain Brown	Sarah Hutchinson	Val Smith
Nick Carter	Stewart Lilly	Richard Stevens
Jim Couchman	A.M. Lovatt	Lawrie Stratford
Tony Crabbe	Sajjad Hussain Malik	John Tanner
Roy Darke	Kieron Mallon	Alan Thompson
Arash Fatemian	Charles Mathew	Melinda Tilley
Anda Fitzgerald-O'Connor	Keith R. Mitchell CBE	David Turner
	David Nimmo-Smith	Carol Viney
Jean Fooks	Neil Owen	Michael Waine
Anthony Gearing	Zoé Patrick	David Wilmshurst
Michael Gibbard		

The Council considered the matters, reports and recommendations contained or referred to in the agenda for the meeting and decided as set out below. Except insofar as otherwise specified, the reasons for the decisions are contained in the agenda and reports, copies of which are attached to the signed Minutes.

128/12 MINUTES

(Agenda Item 1)

RESOLVED: that the Minutes of the meeting held on 13 December 2011 be approved and signed subject to the following amendment to Annex 1 of the Minutes – supplementary answer to question 6:

"We had our own investigation into the supply and demand figures required and we came out with the figure of 1.26 million which we feel is a good

average if you take into account the fact that the ***reduction in demand*** is due to the economic downturn"

129/12 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE
(Agenda Item 2)

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Altaf-Khan, Chapman, Mrs Fulljames, Jelf, Lindsay-Gale, Skolar, Strangwood and N.Turner.

RESOLVED: to approve, for the purposes of Section 85 of the Local Government Act 1972, the absence of Councillor Peter Jones from any meeting of the Authority from the date of this meeting for six months on the grounds of his serious ill health."

130/12 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST
(Agenda Item 3)

RESOLVED: that all members declared a personal interest in Agenda Item 8, noting the specific exemption under the Code for all members from declaring this as a prejudicial interest, in order for the Council to make a decision with regards to the Budget.

131/12 OFFICIAL COMMUNICATIONS
(Agenda Item 4)

The Chairman reported as follows:

(i)   The Chairman reported that, following consultation with the Group Leaders, it had been agreed that the BBC would be filming debate on the Budget.

(ii)   The Chairman sought agreement for the Order of Business to be changed as indicated in the Schedule of Business.

(iii)   A minute's silence was held in memory of Councillor Roger Belson who had sadly passed away over the Christmas period. The Chairman reported that a memorial service was to held on Wednesday 21 March 2012 at 3.00 pm at The Guards Chapel, Wellington Barracks, London. Those members who were interested in attending were to contact Jenny Larkcom regarding transport.

(iv)   Councillors Mallon, Purse and Brighouse then shared memories and experiences with Council and paid tribute to Councillor Belson.

(v)   The Chairman reported that he had written and congratulated those on the New Years Honours list which had a connection with Oxfordshire list attached as Annex 1 to the decisions).

(vi)   The Council congratulated Tim Stimpson, Facilities Manager for the County Council on receiving the MBE in the New Year's Honours List for services to Oxfordshire.

132/12 APPOINTMENTS

(Agenda Item 5)

RESOLVED: to

(a) appoint Councillor Patrick Greene to the vacancy on the Growth & Infrastructure Scrutiny Committee;

(b) appoint Councillor Stewart Lilly to the vacancy on the Planning & Regulation Committee.

133/12 PETITIONS AND PUBLIC ADDRESS

(Agenda Item 6)

The following address was received:

Agenda Item 8 – Service & Resource Planning 2012/13 – 2016/17

Ms Sushila Dhall addressed the Council outlining the implications of focusing future funding for Mental Health around rehabilitation and recovery rather than support as this would mean hardship for Metal Health patients who were unlikely to get better.

134/12 SERVICE & RESOURCE PLANNING 2012/13 - 2016/17

(Agenda Item 8)

The Council had before them the Report of the Assistant Chief Executive & Chief Finance Officer (CC8), a supplementary Report of the Assistant Chief Executive & Chief Finance Officer, the Report of the Cabinet (CC8(b)) together with the Commentary on the Cabinet's Budget Proposals by the Assistant Chief Executive & Chief Finance Officer as the Council's Section 151 Officer. The Council also had before it budget proposals in the form of: Amendments by the Liberal Democrat Group to the Cabinet's Revenue Budget, Amendments by the Labour Group to the Cabinet's Revenue Budget and Amendments by the Green Group to the Cabinet's Revenue Budget together with Commentary by the Assistant Chief Executive & Chief Finance Officer as the Council's Section 151 Officer.

Councillor Mitchell moved and Councillor Couchman seconded the Cabinet's recommendations on Service and Resource Planning 2012/13 to 2016/17 (CC8(b)). In moving and seconding the motion, Councillor Mitchell and Councillor Couchman paid tribute to Sue Scane and her staff for all their work in preparing the Budget.

Members of the Cabinet then gave an overview of the areas of the Budget falling under their responsibility.

Councillor Patrick moved and Councillor Armitage seconded an amendment to the Cabinet's budget as set out in the additional papers (CC8 Liberal

Democrat Amendments). Councillor Patrick paid tribute to the finance staff responsible for preparing the budget.

Following debate, the amendment was lost by 49 votes to 9 with 2 Abstentions.

Councillor Brighouse moved and Councillor Stevens seconded an amendment to the Cabinet's budget as set out in (CC8 Labour Group Amendments) and in the Addenda at Annex 1 to the Schedule of Business. Councillor Patrick paid tribute to members of the finance team.

Following debate, the amendment was lost by 50 votes to 10 with 1 Abstentions.

Councillor L Sanders moved and Councillor Sherwood seconded an amendment to the Cabinet's budget as set out in (CC8 Green Group Amendments). Councillor Sanders paid tribute to Sue Scane and her team.

Following debate, the amendment was lost by 57 votes to 2 with 2 Abstentions.

The substantive motion was then put to the vote and carried by 41 votes to 19.

135/12 OXFORDSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL CORPORATE PLAN 2012/13 - 2016/17
(Agenda Item 9)

The time being 4.10 pm the meeting was closed and the Chairman directed that the item would be considered at the next Council Meeting on the 20th March.

136/12 DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC HEALTH ANNUAL REPORT
(Agenda Item 7)

The time being 4.10 pm the meeting was closed and the Chairman directed that the item would be considered at the next Council Meeting on the 20th March.

137/12 ANNEX 1 TO THE MINUTES
(Agenda Item)

New Year Honours list

The Chairman has written and congratulated the following people on receiving New Year Honours in 2012:

Professor Diarmaid MacCulloch, of the Theology Faculty and St Cross College, was knighted (KB) for services to scholarship.

David Flint, chief executive of Oxford Instruments, was appointed CBE for services to business and science.

Professor Lionel Tarassenko was appointed CBE for services to engineering.

Keith Budgen, the former regional director of HM Courts and Tribunals Service for the south east region was appointed CBE

Professor Diana Woodhouse, the former pro vice-chancellor of research at Oxford Brookes University, was appointed OBE for services to legal scholarship and higher education.

Malcolm Cochrane, from Shipton-under-Wychwood, was appointed MBE for his services to the community.

James Hewitt was appointed MBE for services to financial inclusion in Oxfordshire and to the local community.

Trevor Alan Cowlett for services to music in Oxford was appointed MBE.

John Huddleston, from AEA Technology, was appointed MBE for services to the environment.

Professor Robert Lloyd Walker was appointed MBE for services to social policy research.

.... in the Chair

Date of signing   ....

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Division(s): N/A

COUNCIL – 10 FEBRUARY 2012

CORPORATE PLAN 2012/13 – 2016/17

Report by Assistant Chief Executive and Chief Finance Officer

Introduction

1.   The Council's proposed Medium Term Corporate Plan 2012/13-2016/17 is one of the plans and strategies that forms the policy framework and requires full Council approval. The Strategy & Partnerships Scrutiny Committee submitted comments to the Cabinet, who approved the draft on 17 January 2012.

2.   The report by the Leader of the Council on the Service and Resource Planning item on this agenda incorporates comments on the Plan, given the close linkage between the two items.

Background

3.   The 2012/13-2016/17 plan is a fairly light touch refresh of last year's plan, though it also seeks to reflect the significant changes that have been implemented over the past 12 months. Whilst we will be continuing to deliver our front line services, within the smaller financial envelop, there are significant national policy changes which will affect the Council which will also be delivered.

4.   Our ambition is to see a Thriving Oxfordshire, with key priorities of World Class Economy, Healthy and Thriving Communities, and Enhancing the Environment underpinned by Efficient Public Services. The impact of business development on the economy and how it leads to strong communities is a thread throughout the plan.

5.   The Corporate Plan is split into three parts – the first summarises the Council's broad strategic direction; the second sets our Priorities for Action and the third shows how we will deliver against those priorities.

6.   Many of the priorities for action identified in the Corporate Plan are about achieving a tangible improvement in outcomes as outlined below. Targets will be set where appropriate. Progress on these issues will form the basis of the regular quarterly performance reports that are provided to the Council's Cabinet and Strategy and Partnerships Scrutiny Committee. Other priorities for action are harder to measure; they seek behavioural / cultural change within the council or identify a need to respond to shifts in national policy. A qualitative assessment of progress against these issues will be provided at the end of 2012/13.

7.	A summary of the key elements of the Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) will also be included and the MTFP will form an annex to the plan.

RECOMMENDATION

8.	**The Cabinet RECOMMENDS Council to approve the Corporate Plan 2012/13-2016/17 subject to the inclusion of consequential and editorial changes in the text as agreed by the Chief Executive after consultation with the Leader of the Council.**

SUE SCANE
Assistant Chief Executive and Chief Finance Officer

Background Papers: Nil
Contact Officer: Maggie Scott, Senior Policy Manager, 01865 816081

January 2012

Oxfordshire County Council Corporate Plan 2012/13 – 2016/17

Foreword from the Council Leader

In this, my last report as Leader of the Council, I believe there is a fundamental and developing role for strategic authorities like Oxfordshire in what I will describe as Leadership of Place.

The County Council is committed to growing our economy, improving the well-being of our population, particularly breaking the pernicious cycle of deprivation that impacts on troubled families, while also maintaining the quality of our environment.

To achieve this there is a crying need for a coherent approach across public agencies. Local government has the democratic mandate and legitimacy to provide that leadership. It does not give us the right to direct local partners, but it does give us the right to lead the debate about what our county needs, and to challenge and to hold to account other agencies that operate in Oxfordshire but do not have a clear local democratic line of accountability.

This Leadership of Place also gives us the right to champion Oxfordshire's needs with central government. The last government learned the hard way that you cannot micro-manage a country. It appears that the present government has some understanding of that principle but the Localism Act is a mixture of genuine devolution of power and some less welcome centralism. We should not be afraid to tell government when our needs are not being met.

There is a second emerging strand that is of importance for our county. A number of central government reforms are changing our role in service provision. The best example is the development of Academies and Free Schools. We have had little control over our schools for many years now but it is inevitable that most if not all will become independent of the county council before long. What role will we retain then? I suggest we need to be the champion of children and parents, ready to hold to account schools that do not strive for excellence in all and able to anticipate and deal with market failure. We will have an interesting role in this new market place and there are bound to be unintended consequences for which we and only we will have the capacity and local knowledge to manage.

Another area is in the health reforms where we welcome the return of public health to local authority control. We also welcome the opportunity to work with health colleagues in planning and commissioning health services for Oxfordshire. We hope this will bring the chance to integrate health and social care, reduce health inequalities and transform the health service to one that concentrates on maintaining good health as well as treating illness. Given our good and positive relationship with the health system over the years, we have a strong starting position from which to make that journey.

We have our share of troubled families in Oxfordshire. Their primary characteristic is the engagement of many different agencies in providing support to them and a persistent inability to break a cycle of deprivation, lack of ambition, benefit dependency and worklessness. We have been working for a while on a programme of Early Intervention and I like to think that the Prime Minister's recent announcement of a national scheme to support troubled families has taken some inspiration from the work that I know he has seen here in Oxfordshire.

In all of this, I firmly believe that local government faces a nexus in its relationship with central government. We need to demonstrate, through our

Leadership of Place and our ability to identify and champion the needs of our citizens, that local government is wholly a part of the solution for our broken economy and not a part of the problem. This is the real challenge of this decade for local government and I really believe we can make a significant difference to people's lives if we rise to the challenge. In time, local government may even be able to shake off some more of the shackles that make English local government the most regulated and centrally controlled in the developed world.

This leadership role must come from all councillors. We are the natural leaders of our local communities. We are the people to whom local residents should naturally turn when there is a problem, a systemic failure or a local injustice. We alone have the capacity to help our residents make that difficult transition from a society that has come to expect "the government" or "the council" to solve every problem to one where the local community asks the question "what can we do ourselves to resolve this issue?" Together with our district council colleagues and town and parish councils, we have that local democratic mandate to speak for our communities, to stand up for their needs and to help them to help themselves.

Keith R Mitchell CBE

Leader of the Council

About Oxfordshire

Oxfordshire is home to around 650,000 people. The population is increasing but it remains a predominantly rural area and is the least densely populated county in the South East of England.

Oxfordshire is a place that people like to live and work in, with a high quality built and natural environment and thriving economy:
- 87% of residents regard the county as a good place to live (Place Survey 2008/09)
- The population is healthier and more prosperous than most other areas
- Our economy contributes £15.4 billion to the national economy and has considerable scope for further growth, boosted by the recent announcement of a 92 hectare enterprise zone in the Science Vale area in the south of the county
- Unemployment is amongst the lowest in the country, with less than 2% of residents claiming job seekers allowance (December 2011)
- Residents and businesses benefit from the county's position at the heart of the UK rail and road transport network

As well as these positives Oxfordshire faces a number of significant challenges:

- More than 30% of the county's workforce is currently employed in the public sector, making us particularly vulnerable to the impact of budget cuts
- Housing availability and affordability remains a problem
- There are pockets of significant deprivation, with 18 local areas in the county within the 20% most deprived in England
- Educational attainment at GCSE level is below the regional and national averages and 6% of 16-18 year olds are not in employment, education or training. These factors contribute to the skills gap experienced by around one in five employers in Oxfordshire
- Positive improvements in life expectancy mean the County has a growing older population; the number of residents aged over 85 is predicted to more than double by 2033, presenting challenges to service delivery

More key facts about Oxfordshire available on the Oxfordshire Data Observatory website: www.oxfordshireobservatory.info/aboutoxfordshiredata

Context

In last year's budget the Council identified the need to make savings of £119 million between 2011/12 and 2015/16. In addition the coalition government set out a new policy direction with profound implications for the council and other public sector organisations. Last year's Corporate Plan explained how we would respond to these changes.

The past twelve months have been challenging. We have focused on protecting front line services and ongoing delivery of the Council's core business whilst at the same time becoming significantly slimmer and more efficient, through radical transformation of all service areas.

Notable changes in the past year include:
- Savings worth £55m on course to be delivered
- The Council is now very much leaner. The restructuring that we started in 2010/11 has continued in 2011/12. All services have now been, or are currently being, restructured. There has also been a reduction in the number of council Directorates from five to three (Economy and Environment; Children, Education and Families; Social and Community Services, supported by a significantly smaller Chief Executive's Office)
- The number of senior managers employed has reduced by over 40% in the period 1 April 2010 to 30 September 2011. In the same period overall staffing numbers (excluding schools) have reduced by 12.9%
- A stronger focus on achieving and supporting economic growth, with the establishment of the business-led Oxfordshire Local Enterprise Partnership and announcement of a Local Enterprise Zone in the south of the county, sitting alongside a refocused Oxfordshire Skills Board
- We have established a new Early Intervention and Prevention Service to work with troubled families to help identify solutions before they escalate
- We have been part of the Department of Health early implementers programme and worked closely with health colleagues to establish a shadow Health and Wellbeing Board
- We have established an Infrastructure Fund to enable forward funding of projects, unlocking further opportunities for investment in local infrastructure
- We have focused on supporting the development of Oxfordshire's Big Society and increasing levels of community engagement, including establishing a Big Society fund to enable local communities to do more to help themselves

The approach set out in last year's directorate business strategies and the overarching Corporate Plan will continue to provide the foundations for our strategy. The next twelve months will therefore be the second year of delivering the four year plan we set out last year.

Key issues to address in the next twelve months:
- We will continue to protect front line staff, in particular in those core services that support and protect the most vulnerable residents in Oxfordshire
- We will achieve further savings of £37m in 2012/13
- We will implement national policy changes that affect the Council and our key partners. This includes:

- o Localism Act 2011 – a range of measures to support decentralisation including new community rights, reforms to planning processes and empowerment of local government and local communities
- o Open Public Services – sets out the government's intention to increase choice, decentralise power, diversify public service provision and increase accountability and transparency
- o Local Government Resource Review – proposals for major changes to the way in which local authorities are funded, including some element of local retention of business rates (rather than the current system of formula grants based on population and need). This puts economic growth at the heart of securing quality public services in future
- o Schools – current government policy places increasing emphasis upon school autonomy, through Free Schools and Academies, and a more specific role for local authorities in supporting those most in need, thereby changing the relationship between the Council and local schools
- o Strategic National Planning framework – we will take a local leadership role to align funding streams and deliver priority outcomes for Oxfordshire
- o Health and Social Care Bill – from April 2012 all upper tier authorities will be required to lead a new statutory Health and Wellbeing Board to develop a local Health and Wellbeing Strategy and co-ordinate the commissioning of public health, clinical and social care. In addition public health functions will transfer to local authorities in 2013, with shadow funding allocations to be made in 2012. A Social Care Reform White Paper is expected in Spring 2012. This is likely to have significant implications for the way in which social care services are funded in future and respond to the recommendations of the Dilnot Review
- o Police and Social Responsibility Act 2011 – establishes the role of a Police and Crime Commissioner for each Police Authority area and the subsequent abolition of Police Authorities. Police and Crime Commissioners will allocate local community safety funding which had previously been provided direct to the Council

The remainder of this plan summarises our broad strategic direction within the context of the challenges set out above.

Our Goal: A Thriving Oxfordshire

We will continue to work towards the same strategic objectives as last year but are now setting these within the context of delivering an overall goal of a Thriving Oxfordshire. This means having fulfilled people, vibrant and active communities, and a great place; maximising economic growth whilst ensuring that the fruits of growth are enjoyed by all parts of our community and minimising any negative impact on our environment.
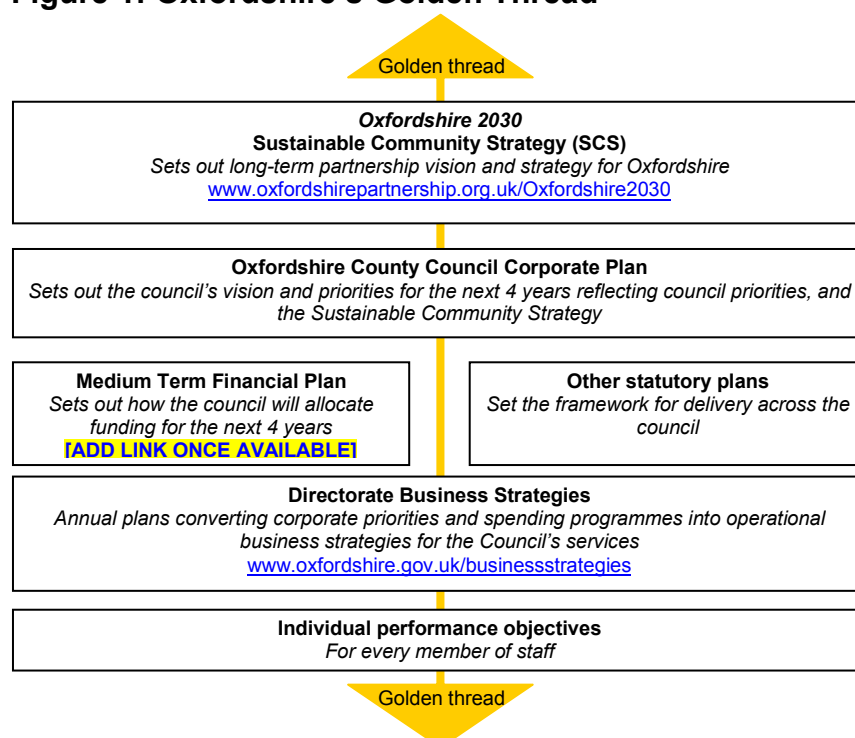
To deliver a Thriving Oxfordshire the Council will work towards the following strategic objectives:

Thriving Oxfordshire		
World Class Economy	Healthy and Thriving Communities	Enhancing the Environment
Efficient Public Services		

These objectives fit into the 'golden thread' shown in Figure 1, below. This links all of our work from top level objectives through to service delivery and ensures that as a Council we take a coordinated approach to the challenges we face.

Our strategic objectives continue to be consistent with Oxfordshire 2030, the county's long term plan which was developed with partners in 2008. Despite very significant changes to the financial and policy environment that the Council and our local partners face, we remain committed to working together to deliver the longer term ambitions for Oxfordshire.

Figure 1: Oxfordshire's Golden Thread

Golden thread

Oxfordshire 2030
Sustainable Community Strategy (SCS)
Sets out long-term partnership vision and strategy for Oxfordshire
www.oxfordshirepartnership.org.uk/Oxfordshire2030

Oxfordshire County Council Corporate Plan
Sets out the council's vision and priorities for the next 4 years reflecting council priorities, and the Sustainable Community Strategy

Medium Term Financial Plan
Sets out how the council will allocate funding for the next 4 years
[ADD LINK ONCE AVAILABLE]

Other statutory plans
Set the framework for delivery across the council

Directorate Business Strategies
Annual plans converting corporate priorities and spending programmes into operational business strategies for the Council's services
www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/businessstrategies

Individual performance objectives
For every member of staff

Golden thread

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World Class Economy

Oxfordshire forms the hub of Britain's knowledge economy with the largest concentration of research and development activity in Western Europe, driven by Science Vale UK, two universities and their many spin-off research centres and start-up businesses.

We have one of the strongest economies in the South East and despite the national and global economic difficulties, continue to have one of the lowest rates of unemployment in the country. In order to maintain and build on this strong position we must nurture and invest in the local economy.

Figure 2: Job Seeker Allowance Claimants
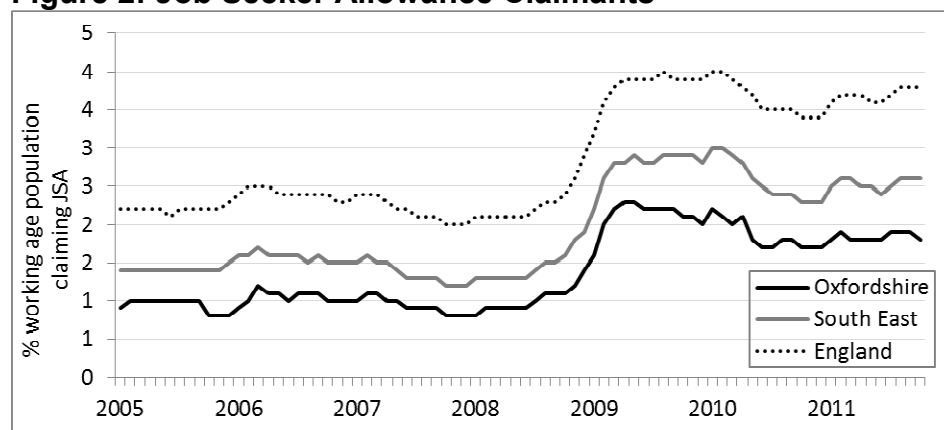
Source: Department for Work and Pensions, December 2011 (from Nomis)

The on-going success of our economy is fundamental to achieving broader ambitions for Oxfordshire. Without economic success we will lack the ability to compete in a global market and generate the wealth that will in turn enable investment to be made more widely in society.

Economic growth has to be delivered by business, but the County Council has a vital role to play in providing strategic leadership and facilitating an environment that enables business to flourish. We are key partners on the Oxfordshire Local Enterprise Partnership and are supporting the establishment of an Enterprise Zone at Science Vale UK. We also have a key role to play in our leadership of strategic planning and infrastructure provision across Oxfordshire.

Oxfordshire has a high level of public sector employment. This includes two universities who play a critical role in driving enterprise and innovation, and makes them key members of the Local Enterprise Partnership.

Infrastructure
We want to ensure that infrastructure enables rather than limits our economic growth. To achieve this we are working with our district council colleagues to develop a strategic infrastructure framework for the county. This seeks to maximise and align national and local funding to a common agenda of what needs to be built and where.

The county's population is expected to continue to grow rapidly, and although the gap between earnings and house prices has fallen slightly since the start of the recession housing affordability remains a problem in Oxfordshire. Ensuring an adequate supply of affordable housing remains a key factor in encouraging

economic growth, so although housing development has slowed in the short term our ambition remains to see planned major developments around Banbury, Bicester, Didcot, Oxford and Wantage realised.

Transport
Enabling movement by car, lorry and public transport remains a key objective. We are fortunate to be strategically well located, just over an hour away from London and Birmingham, with good transport links via the motorway, road and rail networks.

Oxford city already has some of the highest use of public transport in the country and we will continue to work closely with local bus companies to build upon this. Significant improvements are planned for the local rail network, including the opening of a second mainline route between Oxford and London via Bicester (including a new station at Water Eaton) by 2014 and the electrification of the Great Western route by 2017. The government have also given provisional approval for a new East-West rail line that will link Reading, Oxford and Aylesbury with Milton Keynes and Bedford.

We are seeking to maintain, and where possible improve, the conditions of our road network. Further work is also underway with Government Agencies to deliver improved road links at pinch points across the county, to support growth. This includes Junction 9 of the M40 at Bicester, Cogges Link Road in Witney and improvements to the network around the Science Vale area.

We have moved responsibility for road safety education into our Fire & Rescue Service, who are well placed to deliver targeted prevention activities to those people most at risk in our local communities and help keep the county on the move.

Broadband
Although some areas in Oxfordshire are already taking advantage of next generation broadband, other parts of the county, particularly in rural areas, still do not have an acceptable level of standard broadband service. We want to support economic growth and ensure that businesses and others who need it have access to the best possible broadband services, and are working closely with public and private sector organisations and with individual communities to develop the right solutions for Oxfordshire.

Skills
Despite the many positives outlined above the county does face a number of challenges, in particular the need to address the skills gap experienced by one in five employers in Oxfordshire and the numbers of young people who are not in education, employment or training. A significant factor in both issues is Oxfordshire's relatively poor GCSE results. Our performance is more often in line with national averages rather than being well above as should be expected, given the overall affluence of the county. Disappointingly, our GCSE results fell below national averages in 2011. The Council's Strategic Plan for Education sets out how OCC will support improvements in attainment and support schools to ensure that every school is judged to be at least *good* by Ofsted, and *aspires* to become outstanding. In 2012 there will be a targeted campaign to improve reading standards across the pupil population.

Our Priorities for Action

- **Oxfordshire Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) –** we will continue to support the partnership and through it work with the private and academic sectors to create the conditions to realise Oxfordshire's economic potential. In particular we will work with others to ensure delivery of the Local Enterprise Zone in the south of the county, and encourage growth in the other priority locations of Oxford city and Bicester
- **Infrastructure –** we will work across the public sector locally and with central government agencies to prepare an infrastructure plan. Through this we will align investment priorities and decisions to achieve our shared ambitions for Oxfordshire and meet local needs. We will adopt a new approach to securing contributions to infrastructure from developers, and develop proposals that encourage innovative ways of using funds available to deliver necessary infrastructure in a timely way
- **Tackling transport priorities –** we will work closely with our partners to ensure that our transport strategy supports the needs of the local economy and realises the opportunity to develop alternatives to car use where appropriate and suitable. We will seek to maintain and where possible improve, the conditions of our roads, and are also supporting communities through the Area Stewardship Fund to enable them to help us address local priorities. We will seek to secure funding and final commitment to East West Rail, as well as the addressing pinch points in the road network
- **Broadband –** we are working with business network providers to develop and implement a strategy for the roll out of next generation broadband across the county, to improve access and support business growth
- **Skill levels –** we are working with others to link adult skills provision to the needs of the local economy and reduce the number of young people not in education, employment or training (NEET). We have also expanded apprenticeship provision, and aim to continue this important route into the job market, particularly among public sector organisations and local businesses
- **Educational Attainment –** national policy and funding structures are shifting and we will ensure that the council can respond effectively so that the needs of all pupils are met. We have worked with key partners across the county to agree a new Strategic Plan for Education and we will focus on the delivery of six strands:
  - Aspiration networks – funding allocated to clusters of schools to enable them to support each other in order to bring about whole system improvement
  - A concentrated approach to securing strong and dynamic leadership and governance
  - Promotion of Inspirational and Excellent Teaching in all subjects and across all phases
  - Early Intervention and a Good Start in Life – helping families to make sure children get a good start in life and are in school and ready to learn throughout their education
  - Targeted and Intensive Support for schools below the Floor Standard, those at risk of becoming so and those struggling to improve
  - A campaign that everyone can help with – Every Oxfordshire Child a Good Reader

Healthy and Thriving Communities

Most local residents think Oxfordshire is a good place to live. People are generally affluent and healthy, the sense of community is strong and they feel safe in their local areas.

Health
Oxfordshire residents enjoy above average life expectancy, although there are variations across the county. The council works closely with key partners to help deliver the Director of Public Health's priorities: address the demographic challenge, break the cycle of deprivation, improve mental health services, tackle obesity and alcohol related harm, and fight killer diseases.

Breaking the cycle of deprivation
Overall Oxfordshire is an affluent county and levels of deprivation are low, but some small areas in Oxford City and Banbury fall within the 20% most deprived areas in the country. We will continue to work closely with our partners in these communities to address social failure and break the cycle of deprivation that can involve generation after generation of families with low skills and high unemployment, often associated with poor health, crime and anti-social behaviour.

Figure 3: Deprivation in Oxfordshire
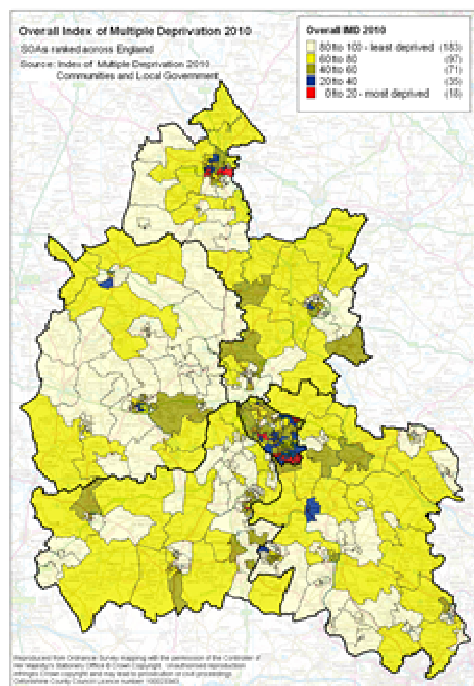
Source: Communities and Local Government, March 2011

Demographic change
The proportion of older people in the population, and younger adults with disabilities, is increasing rapidly, particularly in rural areas. This presents opportunities, as older people are more likely to be actively involved in their communities, carrying with them a wealth of knowledge and experience. However it also increases demand for social and health care services. We will

continue to work closely across the public sector and in our commissioning practices to meet this need effectively.

Figure 4: Oxfordshire population by age group, 2008 to 2033
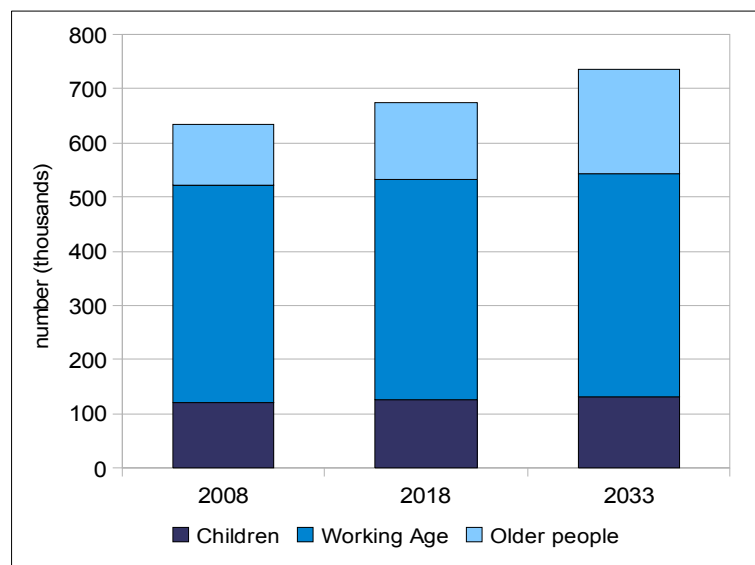
Source: Office for National Statistics, 2008-based sub-national population projections

Support for the vulnerable - prevention and personalisation
The council will continue to support and protect our most vulnerable residents by effectively targeting resources to those most in need, including young people, older people and those with disabilities.

We will, as far as possible, continue to invest in prevention as a cost effective approach leading to better outcomes for people of all ages, by preventing their needs escalating to the point that they require more expensive and specialist service delivery.

In the past year we have created a new integrated early intervention and prevention service, to work with troubled families that are facing exceptional social difficulties. This is an innovative approach that maintains high levels of universal support, whilst increasing the effectiveness of the way we work with those children, young people and families in greatest need by helping them to take greater ownership of their lives and identifying solutions before problems escalate. We have transformed separate services and staff focused on their own professional specialisms, into cross-trained and locality-focused teams. This means a single point of contact for children and family referrals, with one professional taking responsibility for an individual or family.

We are strongly committed to Early Years' provision and want to ensure that all children are given a good start in life. We know that long term outcomes in terms of health and emotional resilience rely particularly on the period between birth and three years of age. Research shows that if children start school being disadvantaged, that gap widens as they go through school.

In addition, our Fire and Rescue Service continues to be on target - at the half-way stage of its 10-year '365Alive' campaign - to save lives, protect property and support the local economy. Our approach towards creating a safer

Oxfordshire will be to continue working with vulnerable people especially around crime and helping them to live independently at home and feel safe.

Prevention is also key to our approach in adult services. We want to keep people well, helping them to live at home and avoid, reduce and delay costly admissions to care homes. We are working with our District Council colleagues, through our Spatial Planning and Infrastructure Partnership, to increase Extra Care Housing, which enables people to live independently with varying levels of care and support on site. This approach is enhanced further by the Fire and Rescue Service being an integrated service within the council and working with adult services, so that key professionals can highlight the safety needs of vulnerable people to each other in a timely and effective manner.

We also want to enable the people whom we support to have more choice and control over the way they live their lives. A crucial way of delivering this is through 'self-directed support' which enables those who are eligible for social care support from the council to decide how they want to be supported through their own personal budget.

Localism and Big Society
The localism agenda aligns well with the importance that the County Council places on encouraging volunteering and enabling communities to address for themselves the issues that matter locally. The county has a strong voluntary sector with over 4,500 community and voluntary groups, an above average number of regular volunteers and an increasing number of communities preparing community-led plans.

The Council's Big Society Fund, launched in 2011, has enabled communities to bid for start-up funding for community projects that would benefit their areas. In 2011/12 this pump-priming enabled all youth centres that were due to close to remain open, either under the control of the County Council or through transfer to a school or community body. The Council is now keen to build on this approach and will use the opportunities presented by the Localism Act to further strengthen community ownership of issues that matter to them.

We will continue to work with County Councillors as community leaders and social entrepreneurs. We are keen to promote community-led models of service delivery and alternative provision of services where viable. We will work with local members, support organisations and community groups to develop options and the Big Society Fund will help to provide start-up funding for new initiatives.

Military community
There is a significant military presence in Oxfordshire with over 11,000 personnel based at six locations across the county including RAF Brize Norton the UK's repatriation centre. In 2011 Oxfordshire County Council was the first council in the country to pledge support to the Armed Forces Community Covenant and we are fully committed to supporting local military residents and their families. We are currently working with the Ministry of Defence to support the transfer of personnel to RAF Brize Norton when RAF Lyneham closes in 2012, this includes significant capital investment into the area involving at least 1,000 new homes

Our Priorities for Action

- **Implications of changes to the health service –** we have already established a Health and Wellbeing Board for Oxfordshire, and will ensure that new commissioning arrangements are effective in meeting local need. We will also bring the public health service into the County Council
- **Improve health outcomes –** we will support delivery of the Director of Public Health's priorities: address the demographic challenge, break the cycle of deprivation, improve mental health services, tackle obesity and alcohol related harm, and fight killer diseases
- **Demographic change –** we will continue to support the increasing number of older people and people with disabilities, to live in their own home rather than a care home. We will increase the availability of extra care housing and assistive technology to reduce the need for support staff, and continue to provide information and support to carers. We are changing the way day services for older people are provided, maintaining services in major towns, but focusing on community initiatives and local decision-making about how best to support older people in their community
- **Breaking the Cycle of Deprivation –** we will continue to work in partnership to improve the quality of life in the most deprived areas of the county by promoting better engagement in education, employment and training; supporting the vulnerable and those with multiple and enduring problems; promoting healthy lifestyles and reducing health inequalities; reducing and mitigating the effects of child poverty
- **Protection and safeguarding –** we will continue to reduce the number of children, young people and adults that need to be taken into care or are in need of protection. We will ensure the multiagency approach to protecting and safeguarding our most vulnerable children and young people is maintained to its current high standard, and will work with our partners to raise public and professional awareness of the needs of vulnerable adults
- **Prevention –** we will maintain our focus on preventing the need for more specialist services through early identification of problems and early intervention in adult and children's services. We will also help reduce the number of fires, those killed and seriously injured on our roads and help prevent crime
- **Personalisation –** we will focus on giving people choice in the way they lead their lives and how they secure the services they need to support them. From April 2012 we anticipate that 100% of adult social care service users will be using personal budgets
- **Localism Act –** as further details emerge we will respond to the implications of the Act, which is intended to support decentralisation of power to the lowest level, including establishing new community rights, reforms to planning processes and empowerment of local government and local communities
- **Big Society –** we will work with elected members, partners and voluntary organisations to encourage individuals and communities to take more responsibility. We will continue to provide a Big Society Fund that will support local communities and organisations who wish to identify local priorities and take action themselves about issues that matter to them

Enhancing the Environment

Oxfordshire is the most rural county in the South East, with a fabulous natural environment. This is an important factor in most residents' quality of life and often a key reason for people to visit as tourists or relocate here, having a very beneficial effect on our local economy. We need to manage the tension between our desire and need for economic growth and the need to enhance and protect our environment.

We have a beautiful and accessible countryside, including four areas of outstanding natural beauty and many places which are nationally or internationally important for biodiversity. The county also has outstanding architecture, including the Blenheim Palace world heritage site near Woodstock and over 1,000 listed buildings.

Figure 5: Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty
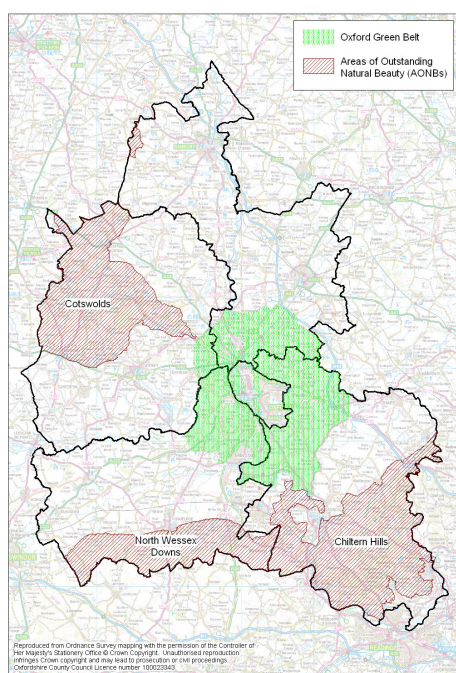
Flooding
Since the flooding across the county in July 2007 a range of mitigation measures have been put in place, but with around 12% of the county lying within the floodplain there will always be a significant number of properties at risk of flooding in Oxfordshire.

Energy
Energy costs are high and forecast to continue to rise rapidly. We are embedding energy saving and carbon dioxide reduction into our business processes across the council. Reducing our energy consumption will also result in financial savings. We will continue to invest in energy efficiency measures in our buildings, including schools, and introduce measures to reduce our demand for energy.

Waste Management
On-going investment in our services has resulted in very high levels of waste recycling, with over 60% of household waste now recycled or composted. We

will continue working with partners to build on the behavioural change achieved so far, thus further reducing the amount sent to landfill and minimising our financial liabilities.

Figure 6: Recycling rates, 2003/04 to 2010/11
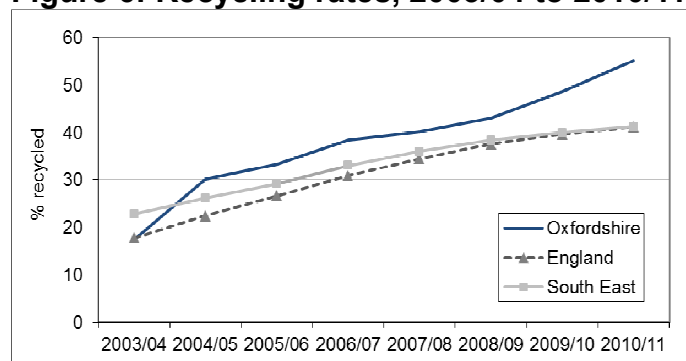
Source: Oxfordshire County Council Waste Management team; DEFRA

Our Priorities for Action

- **Effective use of resources** – we will make sure Oxfordshire's natural resources are used as effectively as possible and minimise the impact of economic growth on the environment. We will ensure planning applications for mineral extraction reflect the needs of the local economy. We will work with partner organisations, volunteers, community groups and local communities to protect and enhance the natural environment, and maintain the rights of way network as an important part of the rural economy
- **Increase energy efficiency and reduce emissions –** we will realise the financial benefits of reducing the council's emissions, in the process reducing the impact of energy tax
- **Waste management –** we will continue to work across the public sector to further increase rates of recycling and reduce the amount of household waste sent to landfill. We are investing in new household waste recycling centres near to the major urban areas, and are closing those that have reached the end of their permissions. We are investing in new disposal facilities to convert waste to energy, and will deliver on our plans for new / refurbished Household Waste Recycling Centres. We will also work with our partners to ensure our investment is complemented by other councils investing in improved kerbside collection schemes

Efficient Public Services

The Council has an excellent track record of delivering value for money and we were 'ahead of the game' in preparing for the difficult times we now find ourselves in. We delivered almost £100 million in year-on-year savings between 2007 and 2011, and have achieved an additional £55m in the past year.

The approach set out in last year's Directorate business strategies and Corporate Plan will continue to provide the foundations for our strategy. The next twelve months, and focus of this year's plan, will therefore be the second year of delivering the four year plan we set out last year.

This plan covers the period form 2012/13 to 2016/17. However local government faces a very significant change in how funding is allocated from 2013/14, when it is likely to be much more driven by local economic growth and some retention of business rates locally. There is also likely to be reductions in national government budgets in the next Spending Review period, as indicated in the November 2011 Autumn Budget Statement, which will inevitably have a knock on effect locally. This means that our financial plans beyond 2012/13 are indicative only and will need further refinement once there is greater clarity from government about the new arrangements.

Delivering our Business Strategy
Although the recent financial situation has presented many challenges and the need for some very tough decisions, it has also provided an opportunity to radically rethink the way we do business and to look again at how we provide value for money for local people.

Aligned to last year's Corporate Plan we developed a Business Strategy to articulate the changes that were required to achieve our savings. One year on we find ourselves in a significantly different place; we are a much leaner and more efficient organisation, focused on delivering core services to support the public, particularly those vulnerable residents with the greatest need. We have undergone significant restructuring, reduced the number of senior managers and stripped out management layers throughout the organisation.

We now have very strong foundations to build upon. Our focus for the coming period will be to achieve a new way of working that will:

- **Maximise the benefits of new technology –** we are already using new technology to help us to work more efficiently and improve the way we provide information, support and access to services. In the past year we have completely refreshed our website so that residents can access information and services online.

  We think there is scope to go considerably further, in particular using new technology to stream line the way we work, so that our staff will be able to spend more time with customers, clients, providers and partners. As this progresses we will be able to free up office space – helping us to save money

- **Rationalise our assets –** the Council owns over 800 buildings, including nearly 300 schools. We know that there is scope to significantly reduce the number of non-school buildings. We will focus particularly on working

closely with other public sector organisations to jointly consider our presence in key locations throughout the county. This should improve joined up service delivery across organisations and improve access for customers. In response to the Localism Act, the Council will also, where appropriate, be exploring opportunities to transfer assets to the community, or manage them differently with greater community involvement

- **Extend the scope of Oxfordshire Customer Services –** we will continue to redesign our model for support services, building on the establishment of Oxfordshire Customer Services and a new customer contact centre last year

Leadership and partnership working

Increasingly the job of councils is not to do everything themselves but to enable the right things to happen – through influence, through contracts, through policy and through leadership. The County Council acts as the strategic leader for Oxfordshire and has an important agenda setting role, building on the priorities expressed in Oxfordshire 2030, our local Community Strategy, and in this plan.

Local service delivery is now provided by a wide range of statutory, independent, private and voluntary sector organisations. We work closely with our partners in order to commission and oversee delivery of better outcomes and value for money for local people. This means working effectively with the police, health and other public agencies and at the local level with district, town and parish councils.

In the past year we have reviewed our existing formal partnership arrangements to maximise the benefit we receive for the investment we make. We have retained those that are critical to addressing priorities that we all recognise can only be tackled through joint working. These include the Oxfordshire Local Enterprise Partnership, Oxfordshire Skills Board, Oxfordshire Strategic Planning and Infrastructure Partnership, Oxfordshire Environment and Waste Partnership, Oxfordshire Health and Wellbeing Board (including sub groups on Health Improvement, Adult Social Care, Children and Young People, and Public Involvement), Oxfordshire Stronger Communities Alliance (voluntary and community sector) and the Oxfordshire Safer Communities Partnership. All partnerships are driven by the priorities set by the Oxfordshire Partnership, which continues to meet to provide a light-touch overarching sense of direction and ensure delivery of the priorities in Oxfordshire 2030, our community strategy.

Equalities

We are committed to making Oxfordshire a fair and equal place in which to live, work and visit. We will meet the requirements of the Equality Act 2010, and are publishing a new equalities policy and related performance information. We have identified four key issues that will guide our approach:

- Understanding the needs of our customers
- Providing accessible, local and personalised services
- Supporting thriving and cohesive communities
- Promoting a culture of fairness

If we plan to make changes to a service we will continue to consult relevant people (residents, service users, providers, partners), and will undertake service and community impact assessments to ensure that vulnerable and other sections of our communities are not unfairly disadvantaged by any changes.

Our Priorities for Action

- **Delivering our savings target –** delivering our challenging but achievable programme to meet our savings target of £119m million by 2014/15 (this includes £55m on target to be delivered in 2011/12)
- **Business Strategy – we will continue to deliver our directorate and cross cutting business strategies.** In particular, we will:
    - Improve our **use of technology** to support new ways of working and customer interactions
    - **Rationalise our property** and encourage the **co-location of public sector services**, and define our policies for disposing of assets to assist community groups in developing proposals for delivering local services themselves
    - Exploit internal and external opportunities to find savings by moving more functions into **Oxfordshire Customer Services**
- **Collaborative Working –** identifying opportunities to work with others to deliver services more effectively and develop innovative approaches to common issues, whether through formal partnership arrangements or more informal collaborative arrangements.
- **Equalities –** we will meet the requirements of the Equality Act 2010, including publishing a new equalities policy and related performance information

Delivery of this plan

Principles
In delivering the priorities set out in this plan the Council is committed to the following principles:

- **Low taxes** – reducing year-on-year the annual increase in council tax to ease the burden on local people, including a freeze in 2011/12 and 2012/13
- **Real choice** – ensuring residents receive the services they need, in ways that best suit the varying needs of different people and communities. This means more and more services will be delivered by providers other than Oxfordshire County Council and we will increasingly put power in the hands of individuals and communities to purchase the services they need or to run services themselves
- **Value for money** – we will have an absolute focus on ensuring services are efficient and delivering value for money for local people

Values

The way that our staff behave is guided by six underpinning values:

- **Customer focus** – putting the needs of our customers at the heart of everything we do and improving opportunities for local people to have their say and get involved with council decision-making
- **Honesty** – being open and transparent about how we operate, prepared to admit where we need to do better and communicating the reasons if we are not able to meet the needs of local communities
- **One team** – working collectively as a council and valuing and developing our staff to perform to the best of their abilities
- **Innovation** – challenging the way that things have always been done, encouraging and embracing new approaches to meeting the needs of customers, making the delivery of services more efficient and effective
- **Can-do** – seeing problems and issues as opportunities and looking for solutions, rather than viewing difficulties as obstacles to what we want to achieve
- **Efficient and effective** – making the best use of our reduced financial resources by harnessing the skills and experience of our staff to help individuals and communities access or arrange the services they need, learning from our successes and constantly challenging ourselves to do better

This year we have amended 'Involvement' to become 'Innovation' to reflect the need for staff to develop innovative solutions to service delivery and new ways of working in the tighter financial circumstances.

We continue to use intelligence so that where possible we reflect people's needs and preferences in the way they are able to access services and where appropriate, to identify where communities might be able to do things for themselves about issues that matter to them. Within the wider context of finding more efficient ways to deliver services, mapping patterns of usage has been critical over the past year, and has helped inform significant changes to our

services for young people and our library services to focus on hubs in key areas of population in the county.

Measuring progress

Many of the priorities for action identified in this plan are about achieving a tangible improvement in outcomes. These are listed in Annex A along with details of measurement. Progress on these issues will form the basis of the regular quarterly performance reports that are provided to the Council's Cabinet.

Other priorities for action are harder to measure; they seek behavioural / cultural change within the council or identify a need to respond to shifts in national policy. A qualitative assessment of progress against these issues will be provided at the end of 2012/13.

Finance

Day to day spending

Our spending plans

Our Medium Term Financial Plan 2012/13 to 2016/17
http://mycouncil.oxfordshire.gov.uk/documents/s14637/Annex%202.pdf sets out
how resources are allocated in accordance with the council's priorities. Our
financial planning reflects:
- the allocation of sufficient funding to resource our key strategic priorities;
- the need to fund adequately our core service requirements;
- our commitment to council tax payers;
- the financial resources forthcoming from Government; and
- our on-going commitment to achieve efficiency savings to ensure
  improved value for money and service provision.

We plan to spend £982.5 million in 2012/13 on the services set out below.

How we Spend your Money (£982.5m)
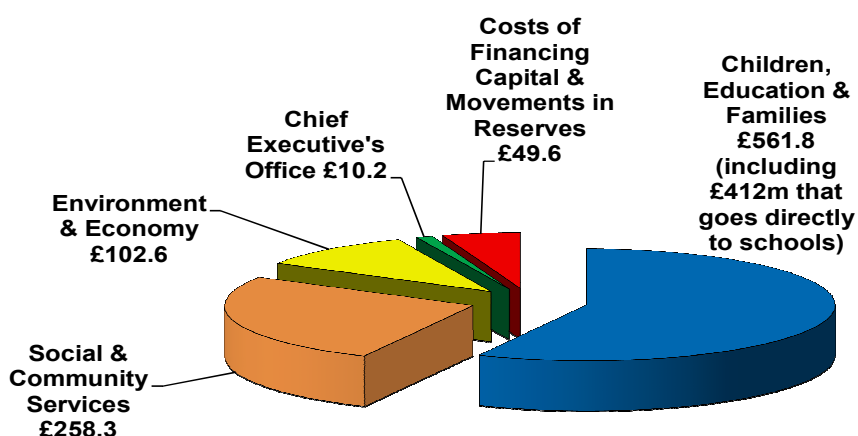
Our funding
To deliver our spending plans, we receive money from a number of sources as
shown in the graph below.

Funding from the Government totals 60%; other income from fees, charges and
interest earned accounts for 10%. The amount to be raised through Council Tax
in 2012/13 of £288.5m equates to 30% of our total funding.

Where the Money Comes From (£982.5m)

Council Tax £284.5

Council Tax Surpluses £4.0

Other Income and Interest Earned £101.8

Non Domestic Rates £113.1

Income from Government Grants £476.9

Revenue Support Grant £2.2
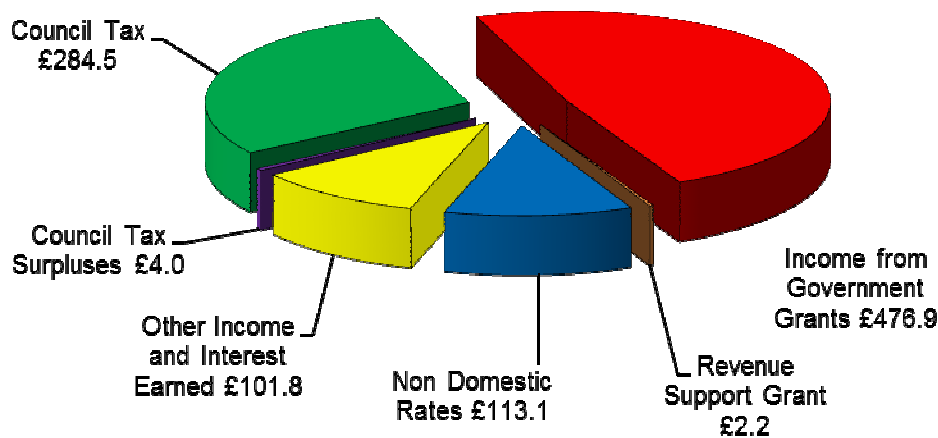
Capital

The Council's Capital Strategy sets out the County Council's capital investment plans and explains how the Council intends to maximise the value of its limited capital resources to support the achievement of a Thriving Oxfordshire and the priorities set out in this plan.

This Capital Strategy, despite the challenging economic and financial environment, emphasises the significant contribution that the capital programme can make in delivering corporate priorities and in bringing benefits for wider communities. It seeks to ensure that resources are used in the most efficient way and they support the Council's objectives most effectively. It sets out a robust, relevant and sustainable financial policy and strategy that aim to get most out of the scarce capital resources over the next five to ten years.

http://mycouncil.oxfordshire.gov.uk/documents/s14588/Annex%2010.pdf

The council intends to spend £415.6m (excluding money spent directly by schools) on capital investments in Oxfordshire between 2011/12 to 2016/17. The projects included in the capital programme are wide-ranging, covering all areas of the council's activity (for example on roads, libraries, fire stations), and all areas of the county.

Annex A: Measuring progress

Many of the priorities for action identified in the corporate plan are about achieving a tangible improvement in outcomes as outlined below. Targets will be set where appropriate. Progress on these issues will form the basis of the regular quarterly performance reports that are provided to the Council's Cabinet and Strategy and Partnerships Scrutiny Committee. Other priorities for action are harder to measure; they seek behavioural / cultural change within the council or identify a need to respond to shifts in national policy. A qualitative assessment of progress against these issues will be provided at the end of 2012/13.

Priority outcome	Priorities for action	Our measures of success are
World Class Economy	Local Enterprise Partnership	• The skills needs assessment is aligned to meet LEP and business sector needs • Increased number of investment enquires turning into investment opportunities • The infrastructure plan reflects the LEP and business sector needs **Year-end assessment** Progress on how our contribution has enabled the partnership to provide visible leadership and act as a catalyst for growth
	Infrastructure	• Deliver infrastructure framework - Districts charging schedules reflect OCC priorities and needs • Capital programme priorities reflect the infrastructure framework priorities for growth **Year-end assessment** The OCC 2012/13 infrastructure priorities are reflected through the district charging schedules

	Tackling transport priorities	• Deliver priority transport schemes
		   o Cogges Link Road
		   o Thornhill Park & Ride extension (and new hospital bus services)
		   o Hinksey Hill
		   o Frideswide Square
		• Number of schemes delivered and percentage of funding spent through the Area Stewardship Fund
		• Delivery of the highway maintenance programme as detailed in the Transport Asset Management Plan
		
		Year-end assessment
		• Improvement in traffic flow around major pinch points
		• Secure funding and investment for East-West rail

Priority outcome	Priorities for action	Our measures of success are
	Broadband	• Establish the digital strategy for Oxfordshire • Identify and contract with a Strategic Provider to improve broadband connectivity to priority areas **Year-end assessment** • Plan in place for OCC £14M investment • Private sector matched funding secured
	Skills Levels	• Improve percentage participation of young people aged 16-19 in education or training • Increase the number of all age Apprenticeship starts in the county • Reduce the percentage of Young People Not in education Employment or Training

	Educational Attainment	• Improved educational attainment at,
		    ○ Key Stage 1)
		    ○ Key Stage 2)
		    ○ Key Stage 4)
		• Improved number of schools classified as good or better by 10%
		
		Year-end assessment
		Progress in implementation of the Education Strategy

Healthy and Thriving Communities	Implications of changes to the health service	**Year-end assessment** • Public Health move into OCC • Progress of new Health and Well-being board and new commissioning arrangements
	Improve health outcomes	**Year-end assessment** Measures as defined in the director of public health annual report
	Demographic change	**Year-end assessment** • Changes to how day services are provided • Provision of extra care housing
	Breaking the cycle of deprivation	**Year-end assessment** Progress as reported in the director of public health annual report
	Protection and safeguarding	**Adult Safeguarding** • Increased proportion of people who use services who report they feel safe each year (4A) • Improved performance against the basket of priority safeguarding indicators

Priority outcome	Priorities for action	Our measures of success are
		Children's Safeguarding – improved performance against the basket of priority safeguarding indicators (these include Child protection processes, Improved outcomes for looked after children, Number of children in need) Attendances at emergencies* by a fire engine sent from the nearest fire station to be made within target response times (*not all incidents we attend are considered as emergencies)
	Prevention	• **365** more people alive because of a reduction in deaths caused by accidental dwelling fires and road traffic collisions **Adults** • Reduce the number of permanent admissions to residential and nursing care homes, per 1,000 population (2A) • Delay and reduce the need for care and support through a basket of priority indicators **Children (**Early Intervention Service) • Improve outcomes for vulnerable children and young people and families with additional and complex needs (reported through the basket of priority indicators)
	Personalisation	• Increase the proportion of people of who use services who have control over their daily life (1B) • Improve overall satisfaction of people who use services with their care and support (1C) • Improve performance on the basket of indicators to measure the personalisation of care
	Road Safety	• Reduce the number of people killed or seriously injured on the roads
	Localism Act	**Year-end assessment** Our response to implications of the Localism Act
	Big Society	• Number of Community projects supported by the Big Society Fund
Environment	Waste	• Decrease the amount of waste sent to landfill

Priority outcome	Priorities for action	Our measures of success are
	management	• Increase the amount of waste recycled and composting **Year-end assessment** • Progress on waste incinerator and household waste centres programme
	Increase energy efficiency and reduce emissions	• Reduce corporate energy consumption level • Secure increased quantity of renewable energy supply **Year-end assessment** • Progress update on reduction in the council's carbon footprint
	Protecting the environment and Effective management of natural resources	• Minerals & waste strategy development reflects the needs of the county (progress against basket of process indicators) • Increase the number of volunteer days to support the rights of way network **Year-end assessment** • Outcome of the inspectors report to agree adoption and implementation of the M&W strategy (April 13)
Efficient Public Services	Delivering our savings target	• Achievement of budget savings agreed by Council Feb 2012
	Business Strategy • Improve our use of technology • Rationalise our property and encourage the co-location of public sector services • moving more functions into Oxfordshire Customer Services	• 100% of office based staff will be able to work more flexibly through the use of more efficient communication tools • Reduce the cost of the property portfolio by 25% whilst using our property to deliver the Council's broader objectives and support service delivery • Percentage of main contact channels managed by the customer service centre • Customers are satisfied or very satisfied with overall service for the customer services centre
	Collaborative working	**Year-end assessment** Progress in working with others to deliver services more effectively

Priority outcome	Priorities for action	Our measures of success are
	Equalities	**Year-end assessment** Meet the requirements of the Equality Act 2010

Further information

This Corporate Plan provides a high level summary of the strategic issues facing the council and the organisational responses planned for the medium term. It does not provide details of the ongoing service commitment across more than 100 activities for which the county council is responsible. For more information see the following documents and links that complement this Corporate Plan:

1. Information about Oxfordshire County Council

   www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/aboutyourcouncil

2. Summary of Supporting Strategies, including Directorate Business Strategies

   www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/improvingourperformance

3. Medium Term Financial Plan

   www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/links/public/financialplans

4. 'This is Oxfordshire', key facts about Oxfordshire

   www.oxfordshireobservatory.info/aboutoxfordshiredata

DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC HEALTH FOR OXFORDSHIRE

ANNUAL REPORT V

Reporting on 2010-2011
Recommendations for 2011-2013
Produced: November 2011

Director of Public Health for Oxfordshire Annual Report V

Purpose of this report

This is an independent report produced by the Director of Public Health for Oxfordshire.

Its purpose is to use the best available science to point the way forward to better health and wellbeing for Oxfordshire.

This report reviews the previous four years of Director of Public Health annual reports, re-assesses priorities and makes recommendations for change.

This report reanalyses the scientific information in the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA) and other key data[*], and draws conclusions about:

> - **Is this topic still a priority for Oxfordshire?**
> - **What progress has been made against recommendations in the previous four annual reports?**
> - **What further recommendations need to be made to improve health and well-being in this county?**

It is appropriate to review the previous four years of annual reports because we stand at the point of change: The advent of a new government and the prevailing economic situation means that all public sector organisations are undergoing fundamental change.

The planned abolition of PCT's and Strategic Health Authorities and their replacement by GPs in a leading role fundamentally changes the way health services are driven. We are also accommodating radical change and significant cost reductions in local government. In addition, more emphasis is placed than ever before on local people driving local change. At the same time local hospitals and community services are merging to form large NHS Trusts which are more independent and have more freedoms than ever before.

Throughout all this change public health is 'coming home' to local government after a three decades sojourn in the NHS.

We stand at the point of change, and yet at the same time we serve the same population whose problems and issues change only gradually from decade to decade.

Amid so much change, it is highly appropriate to take a fresh view of old problems, review progress and set out clearly and concisely where our efforts need to be placed.

This annual report aims to carry out these tasks.

It is intended that this report is used by planners of services across the County. Its production has been timed explicitly to influence the new Health and Wellbeing board as it sets its priorities. It is therefore deliberately pithy, brief and concise yet wide ranging: it is intended to be used, not to gather dust on shelves.

I hope you enjoy it and more importantly, use it.

Dr. Jonathan McWilliam
Director of Public Health for Oxfordshire
November 2011.

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[*] *(there is a list of the sources used at the end of the report.)*

Contents

Chapter 1 - The Demographic Challenge.

Introduction

The previous four Director of Public Health annual reports have highlighted the challenges posed to services by the growing number and proportion of older people in Oxfordshire. It is a blessing that long lives and good health are increasing steadily in this County, but service planners face the challenge of redesigning services to meet the needs of older people in the face of changing expectations and a harsher fiscal environment.

What does the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment say about the Demographic Challenge?

➢ The number of older people in Oxfordshire continues to grow as expected.
➢ The growth in the number of people aged 85+ is roughly in line with the England average, *But: The growth in the number of older people is not uniform across the County. It is markedly higher in our more rural districts than in the City. West Oxon has the highest rates, followed in descending order by Cherwell, South and Vale with the City far below. This is shown in the figure 1.*
➢ The *proportion* of older people in the population also continues to increase, which means that every pound spent from the public purse has further to go.
➢ The cost of caring for older people increases markedly with age, rising into the last year and month of life. This is true for both health care and social care. This is shown in figures 2.
➢ Older people rightly demand and expect a flexible range of services built around their individual needs so that they can maintain independence and stay close to home for as long as possible. A new generation of services is required to meet these needs.
➢ An increasing number of people are engaged in caring for elderly friends and relatives and many more volunteer their help. Many of these people are elderly themselves. We are dependent upon these friends, relatives and volunteers. Support to enable carers to care and the framework which makes volunteering possible must be husbanded.
➢ These challenges are faced by the whole of our society. The predicament we are in as a nation and our ability to fund the services as a country have been spelt out clearly in the recent Dilnot report.
➢ There are wide variations in referrals for older people in all parts of the NHS and social care systems. This lack of standardisation warrants further investigation.
➢ Access to services for the elderly population living in rural areas is a continuing cause for concern.
➢ There is a growing number of people with dementia in the County who require access to new emerging treatments.

Key Data.

The following charts tell the whole story. Figure 1 shows the number of people aged 85+ rising into the future. Note the different experiences of the Districts within Oxfordshire, with West having the greatest increase and the City far below the rest. The fact remains that the overall rate of growth is just above the national average.

Figure 1 - Projected population - England, Oxfordshire and districts - estimated percentage growth from 2008 in those aged 85 years and over
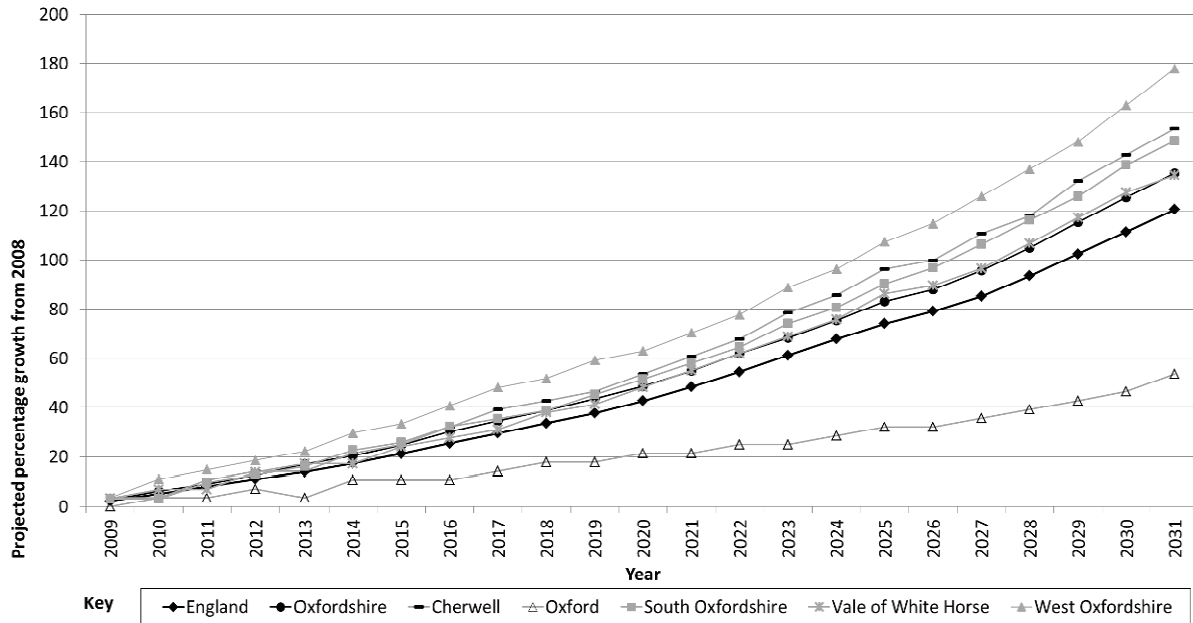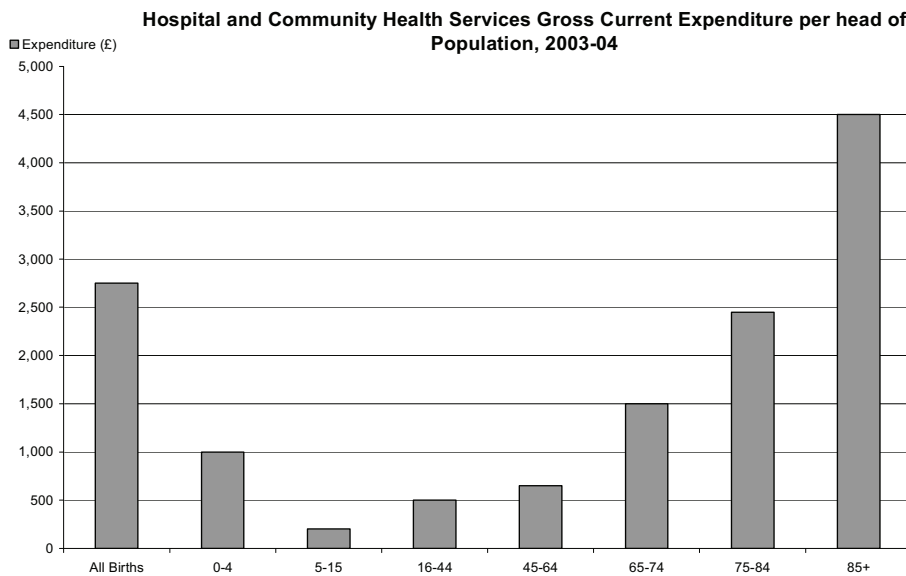

Figure 2 - Department of Health data showing how the cost of health care rises rapidly with increasing age.

The same picture is true of social care and this puts extra pressure on Local Authority budgets. For example, the average age of a person entering a care home in 2011/12 is 86 and the average age of a person starting a care package is 84. Compared with a person aged over 65, a person aged over 85 is 3.5 times more likely to require a new care package and 4 times more likely to require a care home

placement. A person over 90 is 4 times more likely to need a care package and 5 times more likely to need a care home. As the number and proportion of older people in the population grows, the pressure on health and social care to find new ways of doing things will increase. The only solution is to work together as one, particularly with the NHS.

Is 'The Demographic Challenge' Still a Priority for Oxfordshire?

Most certainly, IT IS.

This is the absolute immediate priority and it dwarfs all other priorities in this report. New approaches to the care of older people must be found if the public sector is to remain solvent: we cannot wait.

The recipe for success is becoming clearer all the time. The basic principles bear repeating here. They are:

1. Preventing disease where possible in the middle decades, investing in services backed by scientific evidence.
2. Minimising the impact of disease once it has begun e.g. through early detection programmes and expert patient approaches.
3. Having a single set of service priorities and goals across Oxfordshire's public sector so that public spending in this County is properly aligned (expressed as clear outcome measures and explicit targets).
4. Finding solutions which treat health and social care as though they were a single service.
5. Working hand in glove with the public at all stages.
6. Creating a smooth 'flow' of services from prevention through treatment-and-care and on into rehabilitation.
7. Balancing 'everyday' services for the common conditions faced by the vast majority with 'specialist' services for those with rarer conditions and commissioning these specialist services selectively and with great care.
8. Balancing services which are 'closer to home' while delivering modern, high quality services.
9. Commissioning services using tight specifications based on outcomes, the best evidence and delivery of explicit results.
10. Looking intelligently at wherever REFERRALS are made from one part of the 'system' to another and reducing those which are unnecessary. The decision to refer is the decision to open the public purse, this includes all types of referrals. These include
    - ➢ Self referrals by the public to A&E or to GPs.
    - ➢ GP referrals to consultants.
    - ➢ Referrals from community specialists to consultants.
    - ➢ Referrals from one consultant to another (a particular worry in Oxfordshire).
    - ➢ Referrals and applications for social care.

    (NB looking at referrals *is* a two-edged sword, as the same careful analysis *can* also result in some increases in referrals where quality is found wanting).
11. Working in partnership with private providers of care.
12. Caring for Oxfordshire's carers and supporting volunteers.

13. Working with older people to put their care into their own hands wherever we can afford to do so.
14. Focussing on high quality end-of-life care.
15. Creating a climate in which communities can draw on their own resources to help themselves.
16. Identifying and using the contribution other organisations can make – not just the NHS and adult social care. Issues like transport, housing, the fire and rescue service and trading standards, are crucial.

What Progress has been made Against Recommendations in the Previous Four Annual reports?

In summary:

➤ This topic is now well-recognised as being of prime importance.
➤ Oxfordshire has made good progress in recognising this challenge early on.
➤ Partnership working is strong and scrutiny committees have made a valuable contribution. We have the opportunity to strengthen this further through the new Health and Wellbeing Boards.
➤ The importance of good care for our carers has also been recognised and there has been a welcome increase in resources used to fund helpful initiatives such as carers' breaks. This work needs to be further strengthened.
➤ Preventative services such as screening services (e.g. the new bowel screening programme) and immunisations services (e.g. 'flu jabs') continue to perform well.
➤ The care of people with dementia is also improving steadily since a specific group was formed to take this forward. This needs to be maintained.

However:

➤ We have not been immune from structural challenges which are part of the way England's health and social care system is set up. As the 'Dilnot Report' highlighted, it is difficult to marry seamlessly the 'free-at the-point-of-delivery' NHS system with a social care system which is gate-kept by means-testing and thresholds for care. This has shown itself in our struggles to manage the care of people at discharge from hospital into community hospitals or to other provision.
➤ The *scope* of potential joint work for older people is usefully set out in our 'Ageing Successfully' strategy, **but** this is too weak on action planning and *delivery* of concrete results to drive work forward. This needs to be rectified.
➤ We have also yet to identify and agree a set of outcome measures relevant for Oxfordshire for the care of older people for all public sector organisations. Without this we have no compass to steer by and no yardstick to measure progress. This must be a major priority for the new Health and Wellbeing Board.
➤ We have yet to strike the right balance in this County between 'District General Hospital' services for the majority and 'Specialist and Super-specialist' services for the few. It is a great boon to have internationally renowned hospitals on our doorstep, but it is another two-edged sword. Because we can only spend each pound of public money once, we need to look carefully at referral rates from one consultant to another all of which commit tax payer's money. We need to secure the right balance between high quality care and affordability.

Recommendations

1. Strategic Priorities for the Health and Wellbeing Board

By March 2012 Oxfordshire's Health and Wellbeing Board should establish an effective subgroup specifically designed to take forward practical work that will make an impact on all of these issues. Specifically the subgroup should:

- Be led by adult social care and clinical commissioning Group representatives working together with NHS provider trusts, other service providers the voluntary sector, public representatives and carers.
- Agree clear outcome measures and process targets for 2012, 2013 and 2014 which bind together the efforts of all organizations in a single direction.
- Set clear local trajectories for each outcome measure and performance targets. Performance against these should be monitored and reported publicly through the Health and Wellbeing Board.
- Ensure that plans are produced to correct poor performance.
- The work program should include the commissioning of practical services which will:
  - prevent disease in older people through screening and immunization programs (e.g. screening programmes such as Bowel screening health checks etc and flu jabs).
  - increase the number of carers offered help and support.
  - demonstrate evidence of effective use of the new direct payments for older people.
  - demonstrate that variations in all referral rates will be looked at systematically and action taken.
  - ensure that lengths of hospital stay are minimized while quality is kept high and the figures for delayed transfers of care are reduced.
  - strengthen the careful monitoring and control of specialist-to-specialist referrals for older people so that quality is balanced against cost.
  - show that readmission of patients to hospital or unnecessary admission of patients to nursing homes and long-term care is minimized.
  - ensure good end-of-life care and high quality care for people with dementia.

2. Strategic Priorities for the Oxfordshire Clinical Commissioning Group

By March 2012 Oxfordshire's Clinical Commissioning Group should be fully engaged in joint planning through the Health and Wellbeing Board for improving the care of older people in Oxfordshire, and should plan a general review of the variations in self-referrals, GP referrals and consultant to consultant referrals for Oxfordshire's population.

3. Need for Strong Public Involvement

By June 2012 the Health and Wellbeing Board should ensure that its Public Involvement Board is fully engaged with older people across the County and is in a position to insert their views directly into the planning process.

4. Need to Scrutinise Plans

By September 2012 Oxfordshire's Joint Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee should scrutinize the Health and Wellbeing Board's arrangements for care of older people and should expect to be able to scrutinize a concrete plan based on the items in the recommendations above.

Chapter 2 - Breaking the Cycle of Deprivation

Introduction

Previous annual reports have made the case for concentrating the efforts of all organisations on 'Breaking the Cycle of Deprivation'.

What do we mean by this? We mean that <u>in this County there are a relatively small number of wards where social disadvantage and poorer life chances are handed down from generation to generation.</u> Previous reports have shown that these areas are found primarily in parts of Banbury and Oxford and larger market towns.

This message <u>has</u> been grasped by organisations and mainstream services *are* beginning to be re-shaped to focus on these areas. The overall objective has to be to level-up standards across the County where possible.

The question arises, **'is this still an issue, or have we solved it'.**

This chapter attempts to answer this question.

This question is now particularly acute as GP Commissioners arrive on the scene to invest half-a-billion pounds of public money in health services per year.
GP commissioners will build up a county plan from locality plans; it will be a challenge for them to face the need to redistribute resources to break the cycle of deprivation.

What does the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment say about Breaking the cycle of deprivation?

On this topic we can safely let the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment findings do the talking for us. Key indicators from this and companion documents show that:

Indicator 1 - Child Poverty

The County's Child Poverty Strategy shows that in Oxfordshire there are 15,660 children living in poverty, which is almost 12% of all children in the county. (Poverty is defined as living in a household with 60% less than the average household income[*]). The experience of poverty is not just about lack of money, it's about life chances for young people - a young person participating in a local workshop summed it up as follows "Poverty…. It's what's in your life, not what's in your bank account".

Four out of five children living in poverty live in our towns and the City and one fifth live in rural areas. (12,315 in the City, Banbury and larger market towns and 3,345 in rural areas). This is low compared to the national average, **but** variations between parts of the county tell the critical part of the story.
 ➢ **Almost one in four (23%) of children in Oxford City (5800 children) are living in poverty.**
 ➢ **Ten wards in Oxford, one in Banbury and one in Abingdon are in the worst 25% in England for levels of child poverty, these are Banbury Ruscote, Barton & Sandhills, Blackbird Leys, Carfax, Churchill, Cowley Marsh, Iffley Fields, Littlemore, Lye Valley, Northfield Brook, Rose Hill & Iffley, Abingdon Caldecott.**

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[*] In this case, the average used is the Median which is the middle of the range of all household incomes

This indicator shows clearly the areas where our attention needs to be focussed to break the cycle of deprivation.

Indicator 2 - Young People Not in Education, Employment or Training

This provides a useful indicator of overall life chances for our young people. Being in education, employment and training helps to provide young people with the skills they need to step out of the cycle of deprivation. The overall picture across the County has improved since 2009 following focussed action, but a closer look within the county shows where the major problems lie. Banbury, socially disadvantaged areas of Oxford and Didcot have a higher percentage of young people who are not in education, employment or training than elsewhere in the County. Rates in Didcot and Banbury are the only places where rates are still increasing.

5.9% young people in Oxfordshire aged 16-18 were classified as NEET in 2010-11. This was higher than the South East average of 5.4% for the same period but lower than the England average, which was reported as 7.3% at the end of 2010.

Figure 3 - Percentage of Young People Not in Employment, Education or Training

Percentage of young people not in employment, education or training in 2010-1, by locality (monthly report for the end of each quarter)
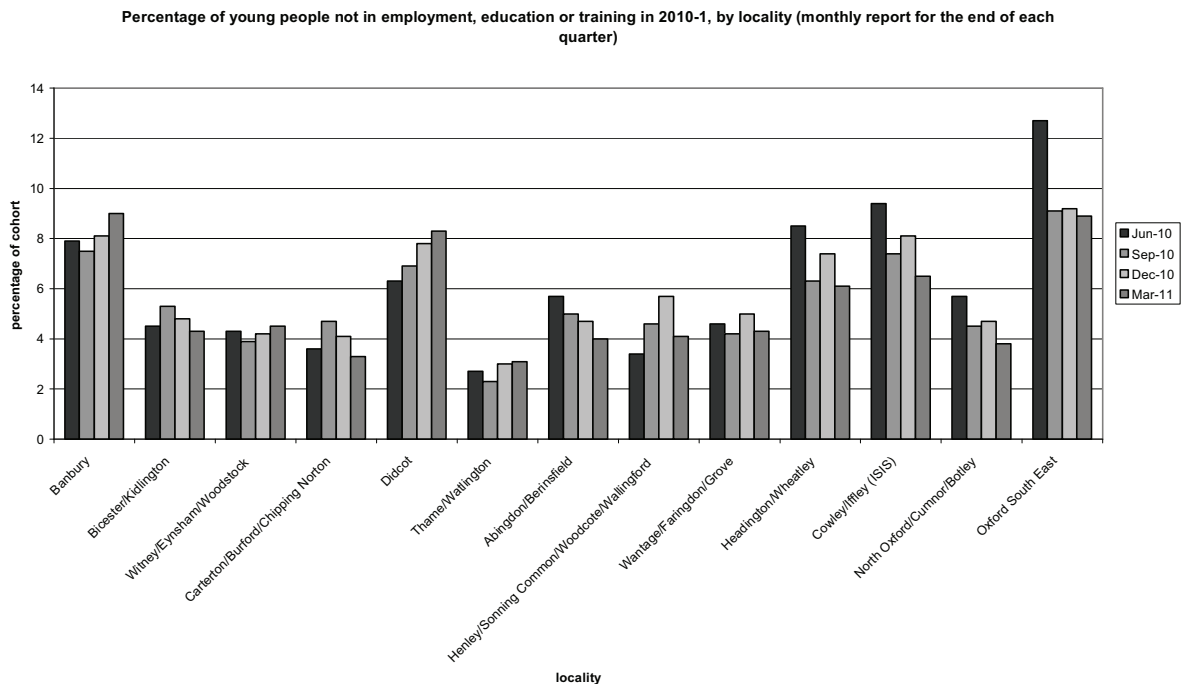
## Indicator 3 - Unemployment and Benefit Claimants.

Being in regular work helps individuals and families to improve their life chances and so helps to break the cycle of deprivation. The rate of people claiming Job Seekers Allowance (JSA) in England has been declining slowly since the peak in April 2009, and seems to have levelled off during 2010-11 but is still above pre-recession levels. The number of people claiming unemployment benefits in Oxfordshire has largely mirrored national trends through the recession, and, thankfully, has always remained well below the England average.

However, some parts of the county have percentages of people claiming Jobseekers Allowance (JSA) which are well above England averages, especially in parts of the City and Banbury.

For example, 5.9% of people of working age in Blackbird Leys are claiming Job Seekers Allowance, 4.6% in Northfield Brook and 4.8% in Banbury Ruscote, compared with an Oxfordshire rate of 1.8% and an England rate of 3.7% (figures from Dept for Work and Pensions, April 2011).

Indicator 4 - Educational attainment

Figure 4 - GCSE Attainment

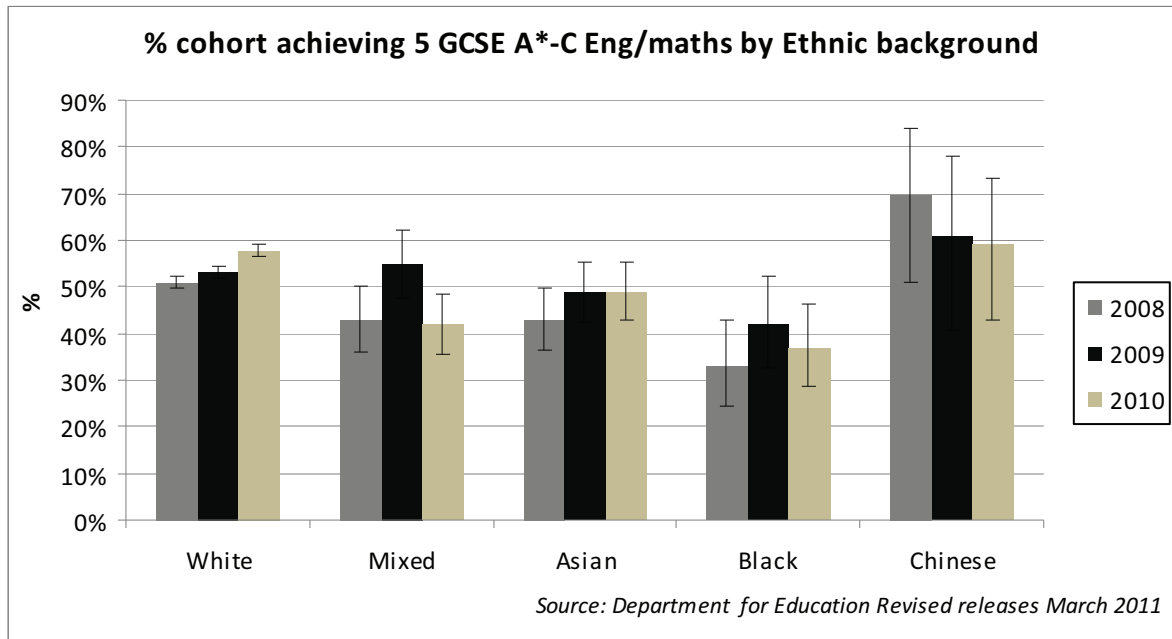Source: Department for Education School Performance Tables
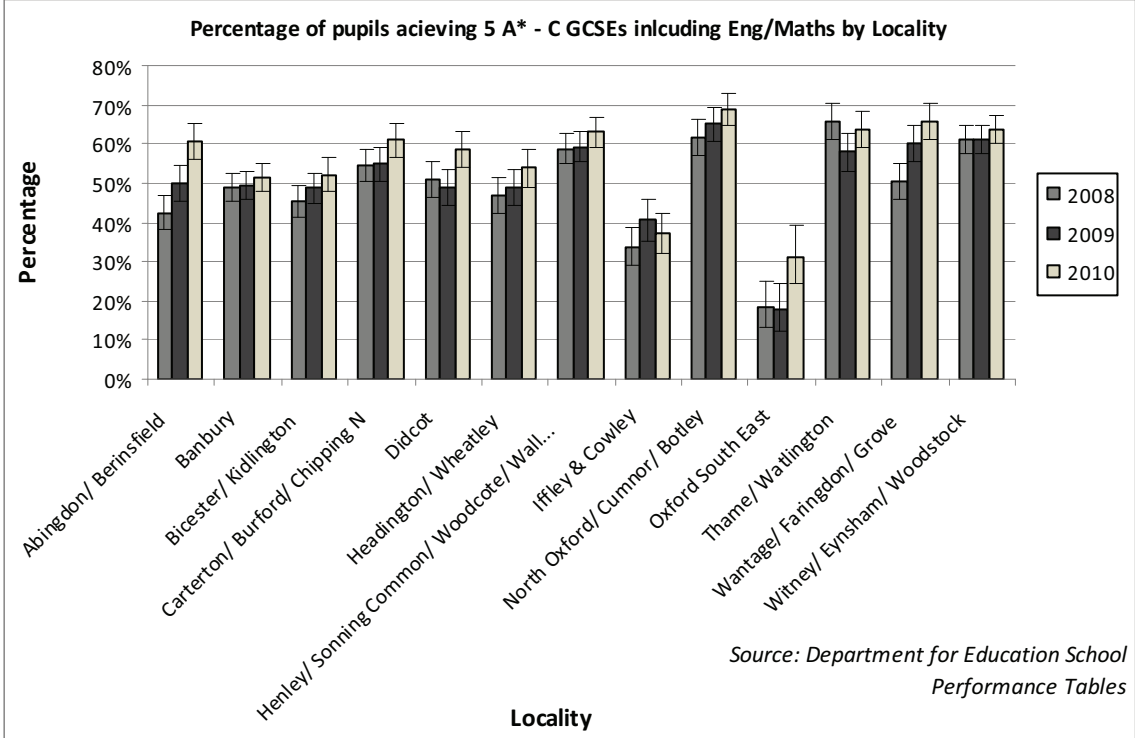
In 2010 the number of young people achieving at least 5 GCSEs with grades of A*-C including English and Maths has risen in almost all areas of the County since 2009. The only exception was the Iffley/Cowley locality in Oxford which will feature in next year's annual report. The 2011 data still awaits full analysis but shows a small fall against national trends.

As the chart shows, there are still stark differences between different areas of the county. Achievement rates in North Oxford/Cumnor/Botley are more than twice as high as those 5 miles away in South East Oxford area which covers the wards of Blackbird Leys, Rose Hill and Iffley, Littlemore and Northfield Brook.

There are also some remaining inequalities in achievement rates by ethnic group. These are shown in figure 5 which shows that results for black, Asian and mixed ethnic children were significantly poorer than their white counterparts.

Figure 5 - GCSE Attainment by Ethnic grouping

% cohort achieving 5 GCSE A*-C Eng/maths by Ethnic background

Source: Department for Education Revised releases March 2011

Indicator 5 - Teenage Pregnancy

In terms of the 'cycle of deprivation', teenage pregnancy is both a challenge and a success - there are still inequalities across the County, **but targeted action has shown that previously very high rates in the City have fallen steadily over the last 5 years.** This is a major success.

Overall the Oxfordshire under 18 conception rates is decreasing, broadly in line with rates in England. Oxfordshire has the 17th 'best' rates for all Local Authorities in the Country and those Local Authorities with lower rates tend to be smaller authorities in leafy shires with few areas of deprivation.

For Oxfordshire teenage pregnancy remains a useful and relevant measure of social disadvantage and poor life chances for children, young people and families. The most recent analysis shows that **Oxfordshire has 8 hotspot wards with particularly high rates**; hotspots are defined as those wards with more than 60 conceptions per year per 1,000 females aged 15-17 years. This is a cause for concern, but is also an improvement thanks to the attention we have given to this problem: the 8 current hotspots compares with 10 last year and 18 the year before that. The 8 current hotspots include 5 wards in Oxford, 1 in Banbury (the highest) and 1 each in Witney and Didcot. The wards with the highest rates are:

➢ Grimsbury and Castle (the highest), Banbury
➢ Northfield Brook, Oxford.
➢ St. Mary's, Oxford.
➢ Iffley Fields, Oxford.
➢ Barton and Sandhills Oxford.
➢ Blackbird Leys, Oxford.
➢ Didcot Park, South Oxfordshire.
➢ Witney Central, West Oxfordshire.

Indicator 6 - Crime

Overall crime rates in all districts of Oxfordshire continued to fall throughout 2010-11. The total number of crimes reported in the County fell by 4% in 2010-11 with violent crimes falling by 20%, Criminal Damage by 9.4% and burglary by 13%.

The picture here is once again uneven across the County. The greatest number of crimes occur in Oxford City, though crime rates there have been falling at proportionately higher rates than that in other parts of the county. Public order offences are more prevalent in the city centre while incidents of domestic burglary and domestic violence are more scattered. A summary of local crime figures highlights crime rates which are higher than the national average is included below.

Figure 6 - Local Crime figures 2010/2011 showing offences per 1,000 resident population. Rates which are higher than the national average are larger and in bold
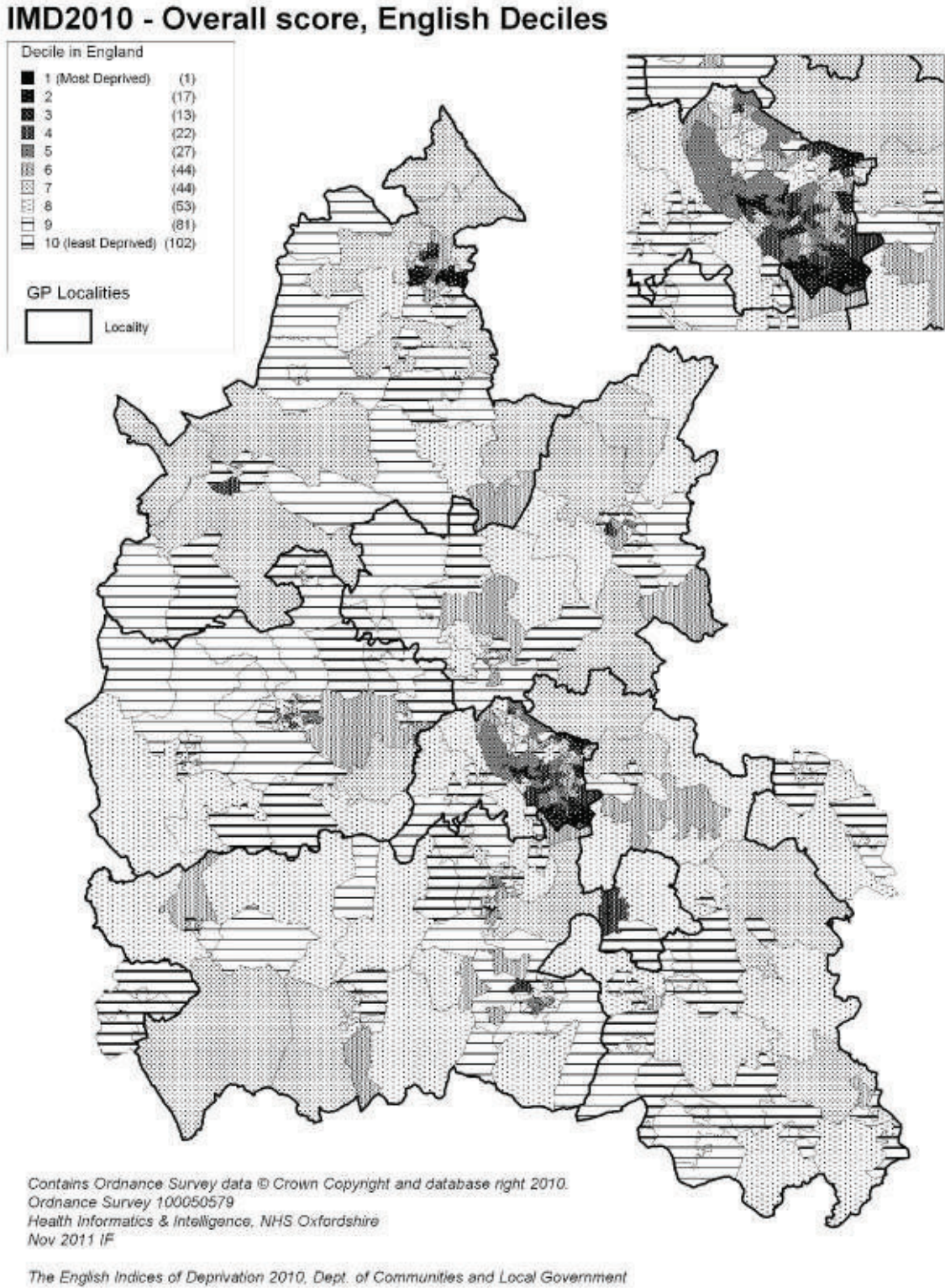
	OXFORD CITY	SODC	WODC	VALE	CHERWELL	England AVERAGE
Burglary	**9.7**	7.6	5.0	4.4	5.4	9.6
Criminal damage	**15.4**	9.7	9.1	7.9	10.7	12.7
Drug offences	**6.6**	2.1	1.2	3.1	3.1	4.2
Fraud and forgery	**5.2**	**4.2**	2.1	2.1	**4.7**	2.7
Offences against vehicles	7.7	5.1	3.4	3.0	4.0	8.2
Other offences	**1.7**	0.6	0.5	0.4	0.9	1.2
Other theft offences	**49.7**	14.1	12.8	11.2	18.2	19.3
Robbery	**1.7**	0.2	0.2	0.1	0.4	1.4
Sexual offences	**1.5**	0.7	0.6	0.7	0.9	1.0
Violence against the person	**23.0**	9.1	9.7	9.2	14.8	14.8

Data supplied by Home Office based on data collected by police forces in England and Wales between 2010 and 2011

Indicator 7 - Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD)

The Index of Multiple Deprivation 2010 combines a number of indicators (such as the income deprivation affecting children index used above), chosen to cover a range of economic, social and housing issues, into a single deprivation score for each small area (called Lower Super Output Areas – LSOA) in England. This allows each area to be ranked relative to one another according to their level of deprivation.

Figure 7 - Map showing Index of Multiple Deprivation 2010 by Small Area (LSOA)

IMD2010 - Overall score, English Deciles

Decile in England
- 1 (Most Deprived) (1)
- 2 (17)
- 3 (13)
- 4 (22)
- 5 (27)
- 6 (44)
- 7 (44)
- 8 (53)
- 9 (81)
- 10 (least Deprived) (102)

GP Localities
- Locality

Contains Ordnance Survey data © Crown Copyright and database right 2010.
Ordnance Survey 100050579
Health Informatics & Intelligence, NHS Oxfordshire
Nov 2011 IF

The English Indices of Deprivation 2010, Dept. of Communities and Local Government

The 2010 IMD scores confirm that in general Oxfordshire is, for most, an affluent place to live. 324 out of 404 small areas are in the top 50% of most affluent places within England. However, on closer examination, the typical picture of disadvantage confined to small areas persists. Northfield Brook is the small area of Oxford which is the most deprived, the next 17 small areas which are most deprived all fall within Oxford City, Banbury and one small area of Abingdon.

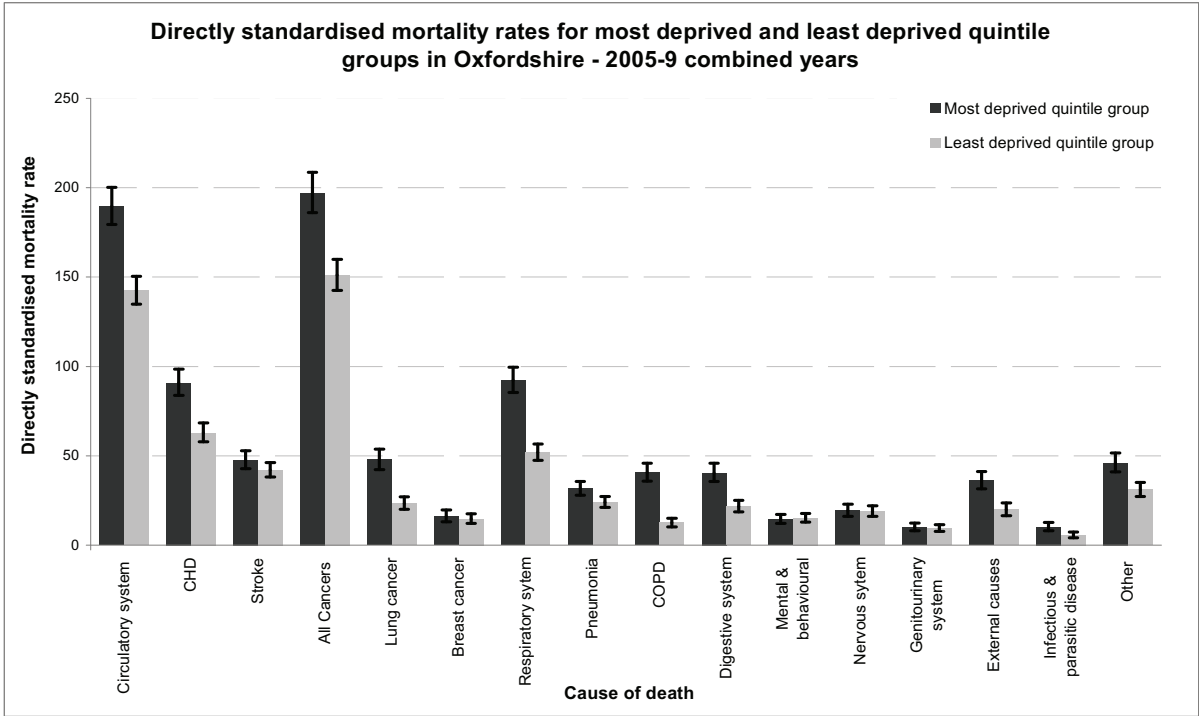## Indicator 8 - Early Death and Areas of Social Deprivation

The chart below shows death rates across the county and the causes of death from 2005 to 2009.

For each cause of death the left hand column shows death rates in the 20% most socially deprived wards and the right hand column shows death rates in 20% most affluent wards.

The chart shows clearly that:

> Death rates in socially deprived wards are higher across the board than in affluent areas (i.e. the chances of dying at a younger age are higher).

> This is particularly apparent in the most common causes of death - circulatory diseases (e.g. coronary heart disease (CHD) and stroke and cancer).

Figure 8 - Comparing Mortality Rates in deprived and affluent wards

Directly standardised mortality rates for most deprived and least deprived quintile groups in Oxfordshire - 2005-9 combined years

Indicator 9 - Breast Feeding Levels

Breastfeeding gives children a fantastic start in life. The percentage of mothers breastfeeding across Oxfordshire is high (79%) compared with national levels (74%), this is a good result. However, there are inequalities across Oxfordshire with not all mothers choosing to breastfeed their children. In 2009, areas of Oxford and Banbury were identified as having significantly lower breastfeeding rates than the rest of Oxfordshire. An intensive support service was set up, working out of general practices serving the populations with the poorest uptake. The practices were Blackbird Leys Health Centre - Oxford, both Donnington Health Centres - Oxford, Windrush Surgery - Banbury, 12 Horse Fair - Banbury, West Bar Surgery – Banbury

and The Orchard Health Centre - Banbury. The service was designed to support mothers in choosing to breastfeed and then provide practical help to continue feeding during the first weeks of life

Figure 9 shows that as expected, breastfeeding decreases as time goes by. The two top lines show breastfeeding rates for the whole county for the last two years. The bottom two lines show breastfeeding rates for the practices in Oxford and Banbury serving the areas with the lowest rates. This shows that, whilst the county average has been static, the extra support offered in the most deprived areas has improved rates across the board by about 4 percentage points. This is a good result.

Figure 9 - Breastfeeding rates between birth and 8 weeks, for 2009/10 and 2010/11

Breastfeeding rates between birth and 8 weeks
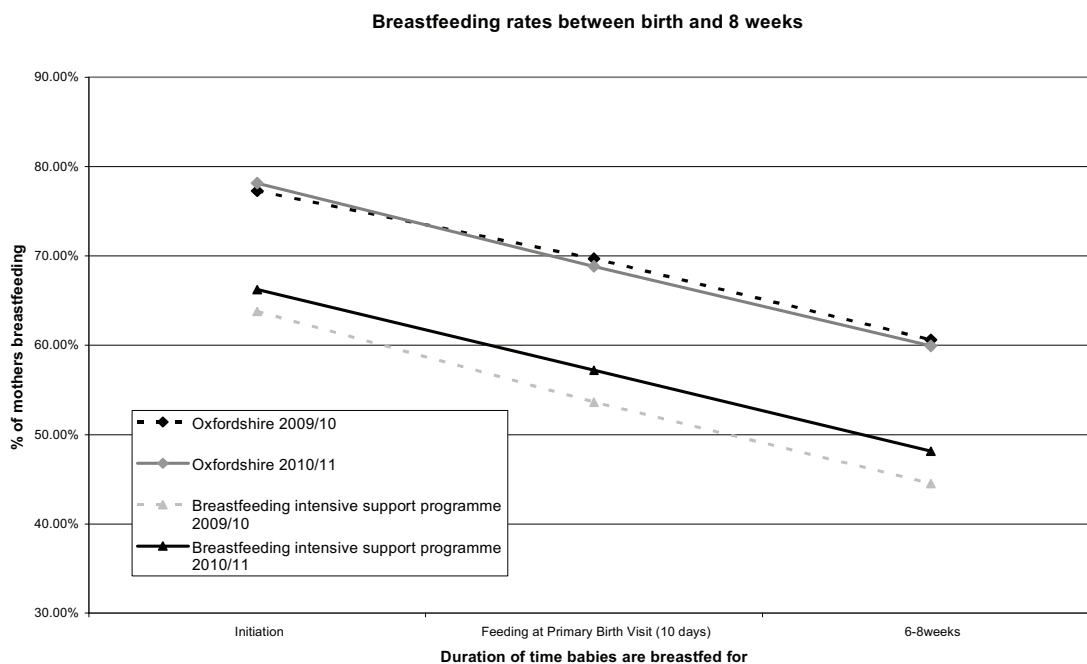
Indicator 10 - Obesity in Children

Being obese[*] in childhood puts your health on the back foot throughout life, and any obesity is a cause for concern (see chapter 4, dedicated to this topic). In *this* chapter we look at obesity rates in children in different parts of the County as a marker for where our effort is most needed to break the cycle of deprivation.
In Oxfordshire we measure obesity carefully in schoolchildren at two ages: reception year (around age 4 to 5) and year 6 (around age 10 to 11).
Figures 10 and 11 compare levels of obesity between the Districts within Oxfordshire and with the national average.

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[*] Overweight and obesity are defined as abnormal or excessive fat accumulation that may impair health.
Body mass Index (BMI) is a simple index of weight-for-height that is commonly used to classify overweight and obesity in adults. It is defined as a person's weight in kilograms divided by the square of his height in meters (kg/m^2).
The WHO definition is:

- a BMI greater than or equal to 25 is overweight - that is a 6 foot man weighing 13 stone 3 has a BMI of 25, whereas a female who is 5 foot 4 weighing 10 stone 6 has a BMI of 25
- a BMI greater than or equal to 30 is obesity - that is a 6 foot man weighing 15 stone 12 has a BMI of 30, whereas a female who is 5 foot 4 weighing 12 stone 7 has a BMI of 30

BMI provides the most useful population-level measure of overweight and obesity as it is the same for both sexes and for all ages of adults

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In reception year, all Districts are below the national average. The City has the highest rates, followed by Cherwell and West Oxfordshire. (The very high figure for 2008/9 in West Oxfordshire is almost certainly inaccurate, due to a data recording error).

By year 6 however the picture changes, with Oxford City significantly higher than the national average with almost 1 in 5 (almost 20%) children obese with the other districts comfortably lower than the national average grouped around the 14-15% obese mark.

Figure 10 - Obesity amongst children in Reception Year 2006 to 2009 (Academic Years). England, Oxfordshire and Districts within Oxfordshire
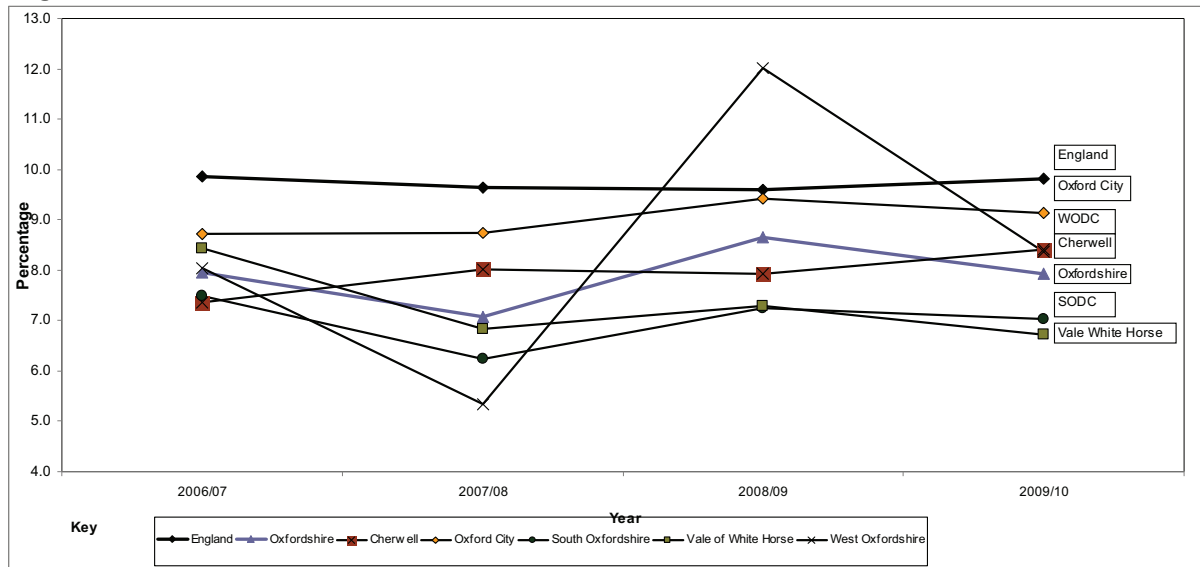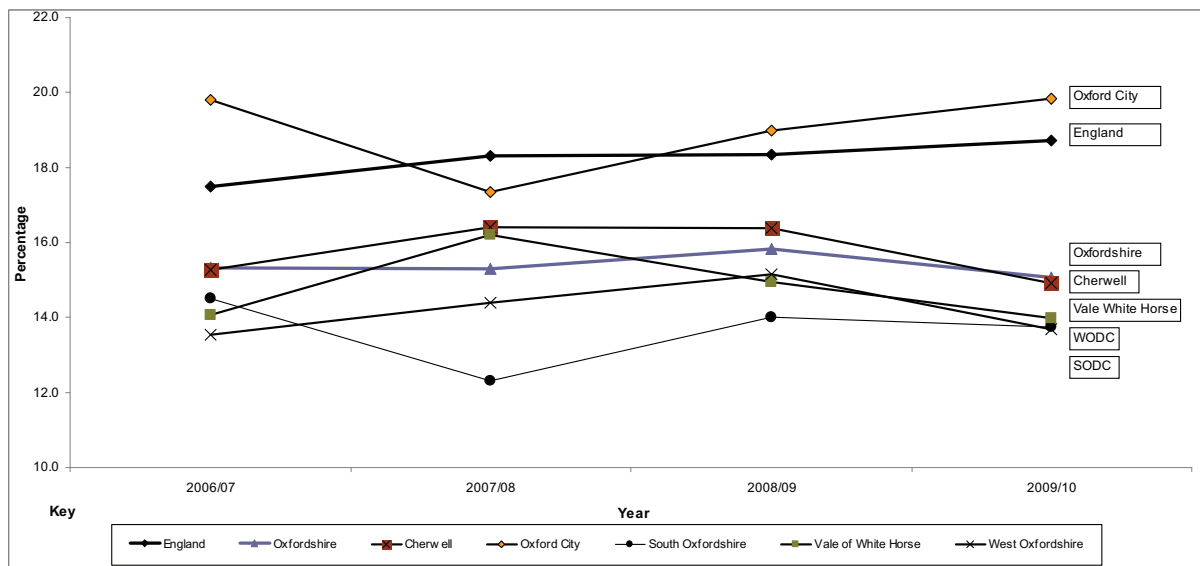

Figure 11 - Obesity amongst Year 6 children 2006 to 2009 (Academic Years). England, Oxfordshire and Districts within Oxfordshire

Is Breaking The Cycle Of Deprivation Still a Priority for Oxfordshire?

Unquestionably yes.

The statistics quoted above paint the picture eloquently:-

Breaking the cycle of deprivation is *the* major long-term social challenge facing Oxfordshire.

As a problem overall, its impact on health is only surpassed by the demographic challenge posed by an ageing population.

We **HAVE** recognised this challenge over the past 4 years and we **HAVE** begun to make a difference and this is a great step forward, but it is clear that efforts will need to be maintained over successive decades if we are to beat this problem.

The issue still overwhelmingly affects the most socially disadvantaged parts of Oxford City and Banbury and consequently, this is where the focus for action must lie. Since we have recognised this issue as a major problem in this County, promising work has begun. It is vital that these green shoots are nurtured with care.

We seem to get the best results when we focus on:
  ➢ **making a difference to *specific families in specific areas*** through direct contact and action
  ➢ **Re-designing existing *mainstream* services at the margin** to give a slightly enhanced focus on deprived areas as opposed to designing stand-alone, short term initiatives. Stand-alone initiatives are always harder to sustain in times when finances are under pressure, and sustainability has to be the watchword.

What Progress has been made Against Recommendations in the Previous Four Annual reports?
Breaking the cycle of deprivation is now recognised as a major plank in Local Authority and NHS policy in Oxfordshire. This is a major achievement and all organisations should take credit for this. The altruistic use of the Local Area Agreement reward grant on this topic bears witness to this and is to be applauded. Important new initiatives and new ways of working have sprung out of this recognition, in particular:
  ➢ The family intervention project which has targeted help to the specific families who need it the most
  ➢ Work to target schools with poor educational attainment
  ➢ Reductions in teenage conceptions in the "hotspot" areas
  ➢ Fewer young people as a whole Not in Education, Employment and Training (NEET)
  ➢ Job Clubs linking with local employers to offer opportunities
  ➢ Apprenticeships, internships and volunteering opportunities for young people.
  ➢ Benefits advice available from Citizens Advice Bureau advisors in GP practices in Banbury as well as Oxford
  ➢ Further Local Area Agreement reward funding being made available for skills development and improving employability.

However the watchword here is persistence. This means persistence over time despite changes in fiscal policy, and organisational change.

The most pressing challenges in Oxfordshire are to:
> Ensure that the new Oxfordshire Clinical Commissioning Group is fully supportive of Breaking the Cycle of Deprivation as a policy and that their locality structure will enable them to focus on these areas in the County when the need arises.
> Ensure that 'Breaking the Cycle of Deprivation' continues to be a very visible major plank of policy across all organisations in Oxfordshire as partnership structures are reviewed and renewed. This should incorporate the implementation of the Child Poverty Strategy. It will be vital for the Health and Wellbeing Board to adopt this topic as a major priority and it will also be vital for the Community Safety Partnership and the Local Enterprise Partnership to play their parts also.

Recommendations

1. A Strategic Priority for the Health and Wellbeing board

By March 2012 the Health and Well-Being Board should have adopted Breaking the Cycle of Deprivation as a major priority for the public sector in the County.
A Children and Young People's Board should have been set up to continue the work of the Children's Trust on this topic and should report regularly on a basket of outcome measures and key performance targets designed to show progress to the main board. This should include setting specific local trajectories for 2012, 2013 and 2014. The Health and Wellbeing Board should require improvement plans to be in place where progress is not on target.

2. A Strategic Priority for Oxfordshire Clinical Commissioning Group

By March 2012 Oxfordshire's Oxfordshire Clinical Commissioning Group should be a fully signed-up partner to programmes of work designed to break the cycle of deprivation in Oxfordshire under the auspices of the Health and Wellbeing Board.

3. A Strategic Priority for the Community Safety Partnership and Local Enterprise Partnership

By June 2012 the Community Safety Partnership and Local Enterprise Partnership should have identified focussed action that they will oversee to play their part in Breaking the Cycle of Deprivation.

Chapter 3 - Mental Health: Avoiding a Cinderella Service

It is appropriate to conclude that services combating mental illness and promoting mental wellbeing HAVE improved over the last four years in Oxfordshire.

Four years ago mental health was definitely a 'Cinderella issue' - this is no longer the case. The challenge will be to sustain this improvement during a tough fiscal climate, especially as the impact of recession works its way through peoples' personal circumstances.

The analysis below shows why this conclusion is drawn.

What does the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA) say about Mental Health?

Measuring and assessing mental health and wellbeing is difficult. Why? Because mental health is such a complex thing - it is so complex and so tied in with peoples social circumstances that it is hard to define. It isn't neat and tidy like diabetes.

Having said that, the JSNA sheds very useful light on the subject -
For example, we know that:

- Mixed anxiety and depression is the most common mental disorder - it is estimated to affect around 35,000 people in Oxfordshire at any one time (9% of adults). It isn't possible to say whether this level is rising or falling, but we DO know that more people than ever before are now receiving treatment for these common conditions.
- Levels of major mental illnesses like schizophrenia recorded by GPs are stable and are not rising.
- Oxfordshire's suicide figures show a decrease to bring County levels in line with national averages after a worrying upward trend.
- Rates of Accident and Emergency attendances for deliberate self-harm such as overdoses have fallen steadily over the last 4 years.
- National data shows early signs that people with mental health problems are becoming less stigmatised. The National 'Attitudes to Mental Illness survey 2011' shows that:
  - the percentage of people agreeing that 'Mental illness is an illness like any other' increased from 71% in 1994 to 77% in 2011.
  - the percentage saying they would be comfortable talking to a friend or family member about their mental health rose from 66% in 2009 to 70% in 2011.
  - the percentage saying they would feel uncomfortable talking to their employer about their mental health fell to 43%, compared to 50% in 2010.

What Evidence is there of service improvement?

The consensus among local professionals is that:
- The need to improve services which help to get people back into work and achieve independent living has been recognised, and these services are now being strengthened.
- Mental health service commissioning is much improved. Services are specified in contracts in much more detail.
- Much better services are in place for common conditions - e.g. more counselling in general practice and improved access to 'talking therapies'.
- The commissioning of dementia services is much improved in line with the national dementia strategy.
- Carers for people with mental health problems are benefitting from a welcome increase in GP-referred carers breaks.
- Joined up early intervention services for children and families will help to spot psychological problems early and will make treatment more accessible.

Is This Still a Priority for Oxfordshire?

Absolutely. The sea may be calmer, but it is by no means all plain sailing from here on. The next raft of challenges includes:
- Maintaining what we have achieved with tightening resources.
- Untangling the way we pay for NHS services within the 'payment by results system'. This tries to fix a standard price for standard treatments and works fine for physical illness…… mental illness however is much more complex as it resists being packaged up and neatly priced. It is hard to see how this will work smoothly.
- The move to join up all mental health services cradle to grave as part of the national 'No Health Without Mental Health' initiative.
- GP Commissioners will be taking the reins of NHS commissioning fully over the next year or so. We will need to keep focus and direction during this change.
- The long term impact of the recession will filter through to increase common psychological conditions - this is an inequalities issue as areas of social disadvantage experience higher levels of unemployment and other stresses.
- The recently created Oxford Health NHS Foundation Trust has now expanded into the physical health arena from its traditional base in providing mental health services. The impact of this is as yet unclear, but it will be important to keep focus here too.

What Progress has been made Against Recommendations in the Previous Four Annual reports?

Good Progress has been made:
- Mental health is now firmly on the agenda as a major concern - it is no longer such a Cinderella service.
- There is a much improved focus on older people and on dementia services.
- The creation of a large pooled budget for mental health services will help to 'glue' together the NHS and Local Authorities in commissioning services.
- More emphasis has been given to carers for people with mental health problems.

BUT

➤ We have struggled to set authoritative outcome measures for mental health - an issue that is currently being wrestled with at national level.

Recommendations

1. Strategic Priority of this Topic
By June 2012 Oxfordshire's Health and Wellbeing Board should ensure that a cradle to grave strategy is in place for mental health in Oxfordshire. It should ensure that all of its sub-groups are playing their part to commission integrated services for children, adults and older people.

2. Need to Review Pooled Budgets
By June 2012 Oxfordshire's Health and Wellbeing Board should ensure that the pooled budgets for mental health are reviewed and are working effectively to implement mental health commissioning.

3. Need for Outcome measures
By June 2012 Oxfordshire's Health and Wellbeing Board should ensure that meaningful outcome measures and trajectories are agreed for mental health services in Oxfordshire.

4. Strengthening the Public Voice
By June 2012 the Health and Wellbeing Board should ensure that its Public Involvement Board is fully engaged with mental health service users and carers and is in a position to put forward their views forcefully into the planning process.

5. Strategic Priority for Oxfordshire Clinical Commissioning Group
By June 2012, Oxfordshire Clinical Commissioning Group should have agreed to make the further improvement of the commissioning of NHS mental health services a priority, and they should be doing this through playing a full role as strategic partners in Oxfordshire's Health and Wellbeing Board.

Chapter 4 - The Rising Tide of Obesity

Previous annual reports highlighted the importance of halting the advance of obesity[*] in our society. This is important because:

- Obesity is on the increase in epidemic proportions in affluent Western society.
- Once obesity is established in childhood it is very hard to shake off in later life.
- Obesity reduces lifespan by around nine years.
- Obesity can lead to high blood pressure and long term conditions such as diabetes heart disease and stroke and cancer which lead to premature death and drive the costs of health and social care which we cannot afford.
- The risk of getting diabetes is up to 7 times greater in obese women and up to 5 times greater in obese men.
- The risk of developing diabetes is up to 20 times greater for people who are very obese (Body Mass Index over 40[*]).
- Obesity adds £1 million **every year** to the cost of the NHS in Oxfordshire alone.
- 10% of all cancer deaths among non-smokers are linked to obesity.
- Obesity decreases mobility making independent living harder.

A **reduction in 10% of body weight** gives the following benefits, even if you do not return into a normal weight category:

- a 20% fall in death rates overall.
- a 30% reduction in deaths related to diabetes.
- a 40% reduction in obesity-related deaths from cancer (e.g. bowel cancer).
- a 90% decrease in the symptoms of angina.
- a significant reduction in blood pressure and cholesterol levels.

What does the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment say about Obesity?

The key facts from the JSNA are:

For Adults:

- Levels of obesity in over 16s are gradually increasing nationally, but levels in Oxfordshire are not quite so high in comparison (22% for Oxon compared with 24 % nationally).
- National rates for adult obesity continue to creep up around 1-2% per year, but the most recent figures for Oxon show a slight fall - enough to be welcomed cautiously but this could be just a 'blip' in our favour.

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[*] Overweight and obesity are defined as abnormal or excessive fat accumulation that may impair health.
Body mass Index (BMI) is a simple index of weight-for-height that is commonly used to classify overweight and obesity in adults. It is defined as a person's weight in kilograms divided by the square of his height in meters (kg/m²).
The WHO definition is:

- a BMI greater than or equal to 25 is overweight - that is a 6 foot man weighing 13 stone 3 has a BMI of 25, whereas a female who is 5 foot 4 weighing 10 stone 6 has a BMI of 25
- a BMI greater than or equal to 30 is obesity - that is a 6 foot man weighing 15 stone 12 has a BMI of 30, whereas a female who is 5 foot 4 weighing 12 stone 7 has a BMI of 30
- a BMI greater than or equal to 40 is morbidly obesity - that is a 6 foot man weighing 21 stone 1 has a BMI of 40, whereas a female who is 5 foot 4 weighing 16 stone 9 has a BMI of 30

BMI provides the most useful population-level measure of overweight and obesity as it is the same for both sexes and for all ages of adults
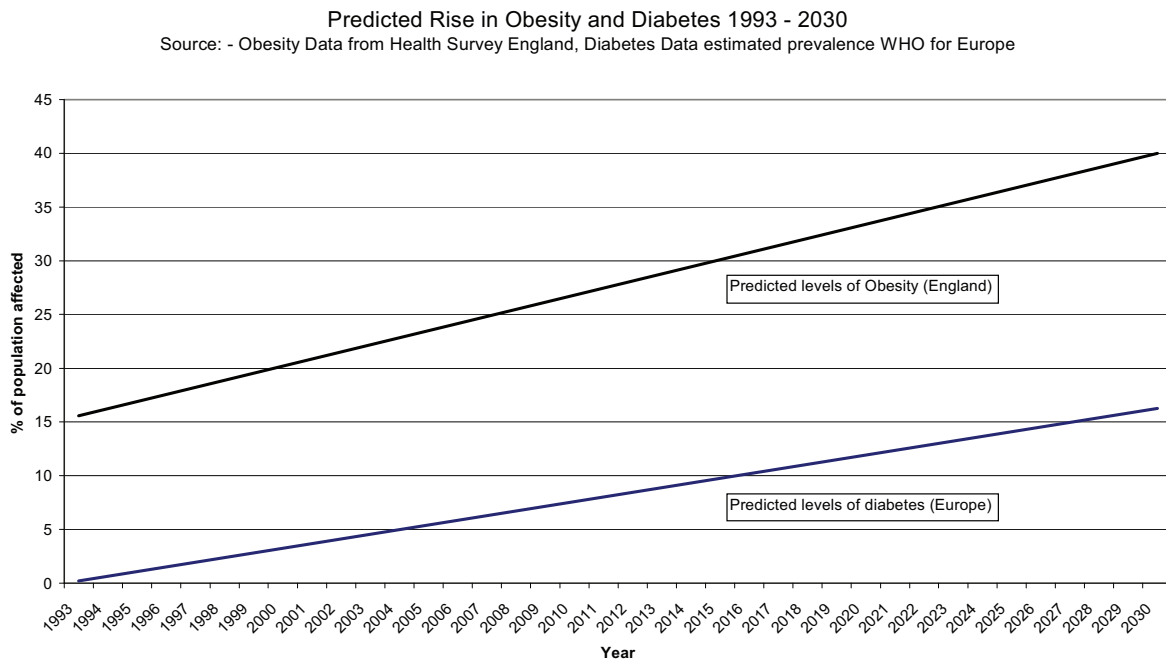

For Children:

> Among children, levels of obesity are too high at around 8% of reception year children, rising to 15% of year 6 children. This shows that eating too many calories and taking too little exercise gradually increases weight year on year, with year 6 levels being almost double reception levels. This feeds through into ever increasing levels of obesity in young adults.

> The relatively 'good' county average masks the familiar pattern of social deprivation - Chapter 2 has already drawn attention to the fact that obesity levels are significantly higher in the City compared with the rest of the County.

However, that said, it isn't all bad news

> The trend in levels of childhood obesity has been pretty static both nationally and in Oxfordshire in recent years (2006-2010). This is good news as our aim is to halt the rising tide as a first step.

> Also, Oxfordshire's children do have lower levels of obesity than their National counterparts, with Oxon reception year levels around 1% lower than nationally (8% compared with 9%) and year 6 levels around 4% lower (15% compared with 19%).

> Oxon can take further comfort from recent data on exercise levels in adults. It transpires that **Oxfordshire is the sportiest and most active county in England according to the latest Active People survey results released by Sport England** earlier this year. Since 2005 the percentage of people in Oxfordshire participating in regular activity each week has risen year on year to 26%, **the highest in England**, with an increase of 514 people participating regularly compared in the last year. GO Active (Get Oxfordshire Active) is one of the projects in Oxfordshire that has contributed to this increase as a good example of Local Government and the NHS working in partnership. For example, since January 2009 over 13,000 people have taken part in GO Active activities such as Dance, Nordic Walking and Rounders across the county and independent research has shown that 84% of those involved are leading a more active lifestyle as a result.

Trends in chronic disease associated with obesity continue to show an upward trend. Figure 12 shows a worst case scenario for diabetes which we may face based on the "Foresight Report" which looked in detail at obesity levels using data from England and World Health Organisation predictions of worse case scenario diabetes levels across Europe.

Figure 12 - Predicted rises in Obesity and Diabetes

Predicted Rise in Obesity and Diabetes 1993 - 2030
Source: - Obesity Data from Health Survey England, Diabetes Data estimated prevalence WHO for Europe

Is This Still a Priority for Oxfordshire?

The fight against obesity is the most important lifestyle challenge for the population of Oxfordshire. We are doing well as a County, but *can* do more to tackle this problem.

The risks of obesity are obvious. The benefits of losing weight are very clear, and yet, on the whole the trend is still going up. Why? Because, on the whole, in Western society as it stands, just by living an 'average' life, it is easier to become obese than it is to maintain a normal weight.

There is some comfort in the data for Oxfordshire, but not enough to justify taking our foot off the accelerator for a second. If we do not continue efforts to turn back the "rising tide" we may not be able to afford to treat the ensuing chronic disease and high levels of physical disability which will result. It is imperative that we continue to tackle obesity as a partnership, with each partner playing a full role.

There is huge scope here for District Councils to link the efforts of GP commissioners, road and transport planners public health staff, health visitors and schools to continue the fight against obesity. It is particularly important to take a cradle-to-grave approach to try to prevent people becoming obese in the first place - an approach which starts before the birth of the child and continues throughout life.

What Progress has been made Against Recommendations in the Previous Four Annual reports?

Progress against recommendations has been generally good. The calls for stronger partnership working have been heeded, and obesity was taken seriously as a priority by the Health and Wellbeing Partnership, a body that will be subsumed with the new Health and Wellbeing Board. These actions have helped us to be in a strong place in Oxfordshire going forward.

However:
It has proved difficult to measure reliably levels of adult obesity and physical activity in the general population. It was hoped that reliable information might be available through general practice but this has run into practical and statistical difficulties and is probably beyond our scope currently. We will need to continue to use national estimates and one-off surveys as a proxy to measure progress.

Successful work on obesity depends on good joint working between organisations. **Following the major re-structuring of public sector organisations over the last year, the major task facing us is to maintain, re-vamp or re-create the strong partnership work we traditionally enjoy in Oxfordshire.** It will be particularly important to connect District Councils, GP Commissioners, County Council, schools and the new Public Health Team as it transits to the County Council. The new Health and Wellbeing Board will have a pivotal role to play in driving this work forwards.

Recommendations
1. Strategic Priority for the Health and Wellbeing Board and its Health Improvement Board
By March 2012, Oxfordshire's Health and Wellbeing Board and its subsidiary Health Improvement Board should adopt the fight against obesity as a major priority, should set local targets for Oxfordshire and should regularly monitor progress against these targets. As part of this process, all Local Authorities, GP Commissioners and Healthwatch are recommended to adopt the fight against obesity as an important corporate priority.

2. Requirement for a re-vamped County Strategy
By June 2012, the new Public Health Team should agree and coordinate a cradle-to-grave strategy to prevent and treat obesity, on behalf of all organisations in Oxfordshire. This should include working together with all Local Authorities and GP Commissioners. This should be adopted by the Health and Wellbeing Board

3. Need to Retain Strong Partnership Working of the Sports Partnership Board
By June 2012, the Sports Partnership Board which has instigated and co-ordinated the "Go Active" project (that allowed countywide co-ordination of physical activity initiatives between District Councils and Health Services) should ensure that the scheme is made sustainable going into the future.

Chapter 5 - Alcohol: What's Your Poison?

Last year's Annual Report established that drinking too much alcohol was a cause of major concern for the future of health in Oxfordshire for the following ten reasons:

1. Alcohol consumption has risen in the last 40 years
In England, average adult alcohol consumption has risen by 40% since 1970. The graph below shows the recent trends in consumption.

Figure 13 - Alcohol Consumption in the UK

Litres of pure alcohol per adult consumed in UK, 1986 - 2007
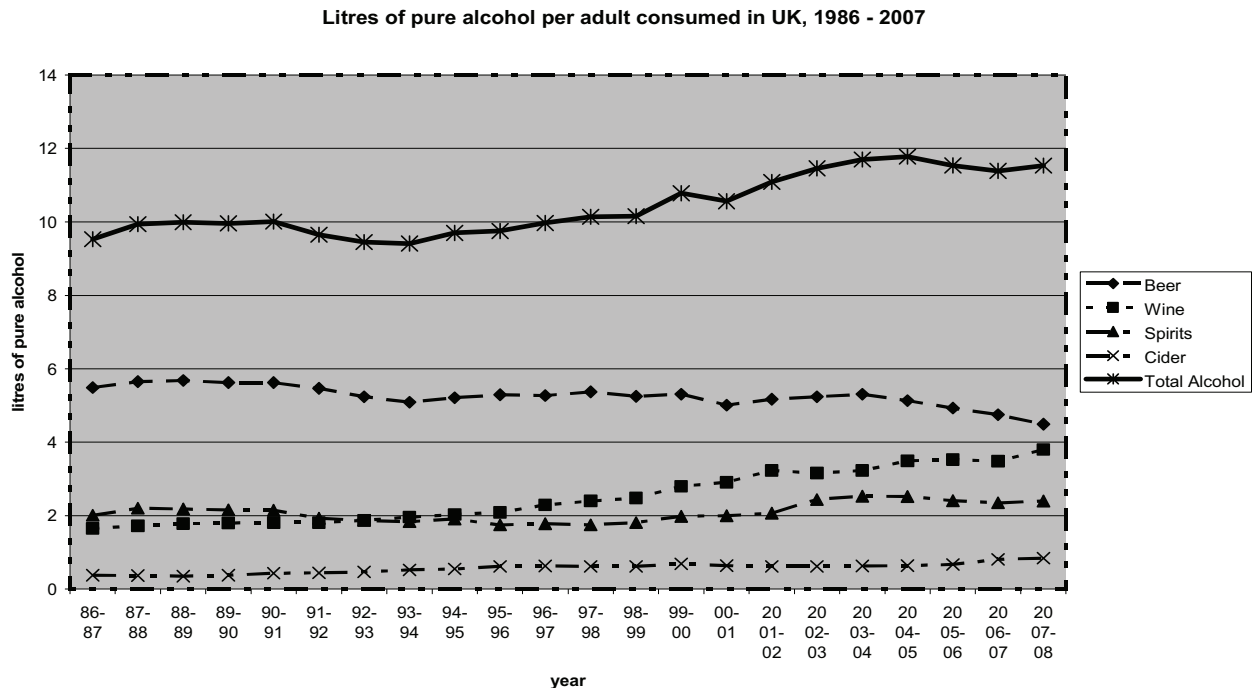
Source: Institute of Alcohol Studies Factsheet "Drinking in Great Britain" www.ias.org.uk

2. Many Adults exceed recommended drinking levels and one in five drinks at hazardous levels
3. Alcohol consumption in young people has increased with heavy drinking and binge drinking a concern in this group. Consumption among young women has been increasing rapidly.
4. Alcohol, without doubt, causes disease and early death. It is a poison.
  ➢ In England in 2006, 16,236 people died from alcohol-related causes.
  ➢ The number of deaths from alcohol-related liver disease has almost doubled in the last decade.
  ➢ Alcohol causes cancers of the liver, bowel, breast, throat, mouth, larynx and oesophagus; it causes osteoporosis, reduces fertility and causes accidents of all kinds.
  ➢ Alcohol is responsible for around 950,000 unnecessary admissions to hospital nationally per year, and this is rising (an increase of 70% in the 6 years between 2002/03 and 2008/09).
5. Alcohol is getting cheaper and more easily available
The real cost of alcohol has fallen: a unit of alcohol cost 67% less in 2007 than in 1987.

6. The health benefits of alcohol are overstated

Despite recent media coverage, attempts to define a 'safe' level of drinking are fraught with difficulty. Although above the age of 40 years, drinking a small amount of alcohol may reduce the risk of heart disease and stroke. For those who drink above this low level, and for those under 40 years who drink any amount, alcohol **increases** the risk of heart disease and stroke. For those of any age, drinking any amount of alcohol increases the risk of cancer, there is no safe limit. Across England, for every hospital admission that alcohol 'prevents', alcohol causes 13 people to be admitted.

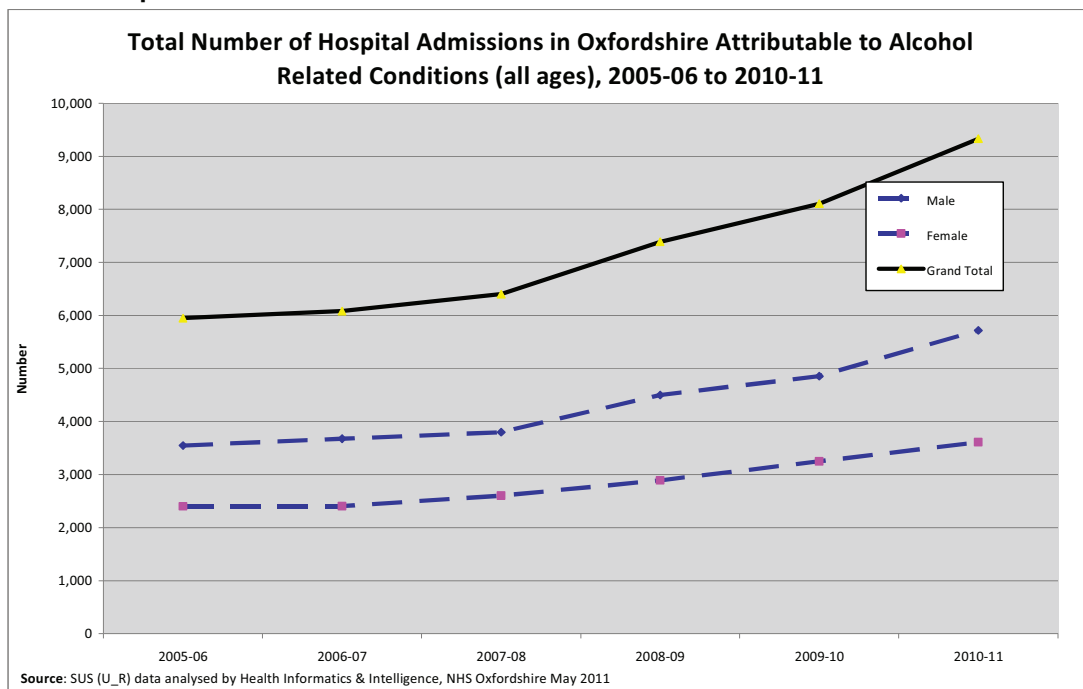## 7. Alcohol damages the family and social networks

8. Alcohol fuels antisocial behaviour and changes the character of our towns, especially in the evening at weekends

9. Alcohol damages front-line services and the economy and places a huge financial burden on the taxpayer.

10. Hospital admissions for alcohol related harm in Oxfordshire are rising

Local statistics show the burden of disease related to alcohol in Oxfordshire. The graph below shows how hospital admissions due to alcohol related conditions are rising steeply and the position is worse than last year.[*]

Figure 14 - Hospital Admissions attributed to Alcohol

Total Number of Hospital Admissions in Oxfordshire Attributable to Alcohol Related Conditions (all ages), 2005-06 to 2010-11

Source: SUS (U_R) data analysed by Health Informatics & Intelligence, NHS Oxfordshire May 2011

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[*] This calculation takes into account health conditions and other causes of admission to hospital (i.e. accidents) that are either wholly or partially attributable to alcohol. The greatest proportion of alcohol related admissions to Oxfordshire hospitals in 2010-2011 related to the following health conditions;

- Breast cancer, Cataracts, Heart rhythm problems, Unspecified chest pain, Urinary tract infections

What Does the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment say about Alcohol?

Last year's report set out the scene fully:

There are two main points to make.

1) The trends in Oxfordshire mirror the national trends well -

All indications are that levels of drinking are gradually rising and that services are expending more and more effort to respond to the results in terms of ill health, accidents and crime.

2) Although the trend is going up, on the whole, Oxfordshire's levels are better than the England average.

In short, we do have a big problem to deal with even though other's have it worse.

Is This Still a Priority for Oxfordshire?

This topic *SHOULD* be a priority for Oxfordshire and the real solution is through prevention - that means persuading people of all ages to drink sensibly.

However, it is often said that "there is a tide in the affairs of men", and all the indications are that society as a whole is not yet ready to hear this message. It is highly unlikely that in the current climate the public sector can push back against the wave of cheap booze, relaxed licensing laws and a culture which subtly condones drinking.

As with the early years of public awareness campaigns regarding smoking and seat-belt legislation, the public are not yet prepared to hear the 'prevention' message when it comes to alcohol. It is even more of a tricky issue because, unlike smoking, alcohol in modest doses causes minimal harm, and it is also deeply embedded in social activity…. But then, 20 years ago so was smoking…….

This leaves us with a two-edged strategy:

1) Do what we can to chip away at public attitudes which support drinking to excess through education of all age groups.

2) In the meantime continue to apply sticking plaster to the symptoms through 'harm minimisation' approaches.

We are good at harm minimisation in Oxfordshire and we should be proud of what our blue-light services have achieved working with Local Authorities, the NHS and other partners. Some of the good work done is showcased in the next section.

What Progress has been made Against Recommendations in the Previous Four Annual reports?

Last year's recommendation was a clarion call to strengthen our harm minimisation strategy for Oxfordshire. This has been achieved well. A new strategy is in place and it is being actioned by a well-organised strategy group working across many organisations.

Here are 3 priority areas giving examples of good progress:

1. Community safety
   - Violent crime rates have continued to fall and our cities and town centres are safer. Latest figures for July – Sept 2011 show a decrease of 23% in the number of violent crimes compared with the same three months last year. This is a total of 169 fewer crimes just in those 3 months. The City had the biggest reduction, with 104 fewer violent crimes than in this period last year. This continues a long term trend for falling crime rates across the County. In addition, offering targeted advice to the most vulnerable people in A&E who are injured because of their drinking people has shown a 70% reduction in repeat attendances. The advice is offered to those who have already attended A&E several times and everyone aged under 18 with alcohol related conditions.
2. Health
   - Comprehensive guidelines have been produced for GPs and other practitioners to help with offering advice or referral for help to reduce alcohol related harm. The first step is to use a simple set of questions to get an idea of alcohol intake and then the practitioner can offer help and support accordingly.
3. Children and Young People
   - Lesson plans and follow-up activities for the school curriculum are available for teachers so that the issue of alcohol can be raised for discussion with young people. Work is also underway to help young carers whose parents may be misusing alcohol.

Recommendations

1. Strategic Priority of this topic
By March 2012 the Oxfordshire Community Safety Partnership and The Oxfordshire Drug and Alcohol Action Team should confirm the Alcohol prevention and harm minimisation remain priorities. Within this framework, the multi-agency approach of the Alcohol Strategy Group must be maintained and continually developed.

2. Strategic Alignment and clarity of who-does what
By March 2012, the Oxfordshire Community Safety Partnership and the Oxfordshire Health and Wellbeing Board should have reached agreement that the Oxfordshire Community Safety Partnership will take a lead role on setting outcome measures for alcohol and achieving progress. This progress should be reported to the Oxfordshire Health and Wellbeing Board via its Health Improvement Board.

3. Prevention and Education
By June 2012 an authoritative 'set' of public messages should be widely used throughout Oxfordshire tailored to different audiences, to help people to understand the personal implications of drinking alcohol. This is intended to help people make their own informed choices. These messages should be planned and promulgated through the Oxfordshire Community Safety Partnership working with Oxfordshire's Public Health Team.

4. Harm Minimisation

By June 2012 work the Oxfordshire Community Safety Partnership should conclude work with the Oxfordshire Clinical Commissioning Group to find the best means to develop the offer of brief advice through primary care and other settings, not just targeting those who are drinking at harmful levels but also using the AUDIT screening tool to help everyone understand their current level of drinking and whether there is reason to be concerned.

5. Moving gradually 'upstream' from harm minimisation towards prevention

By June 2012, the Oxfordshire Community Safety Partnership should ensure that essential reactive services are maintained to minimise alcohol related harm, (for example, through Nightsafe initiatives), **And** continue to move towards prevention in all this work. Specific plans should be drawn up to enhance the preventive element of all harm minimisation programmes. Examples of these approaches are:

➢ Promoting the work of Street Pastors who provide an important preventive element in keeping the night time economy safe.
➢ Finding new ways of reducing under-age sales.
➢ Enforcing licensing conditions.

Chapter 6 - Fighting Killer Diseases

Communicable diseases can have a major impact on the health of a population. A communicable disease is one which spreads from person to person through the air, water, food or person to person contact.

Over the last four years, most of the major killer infectious diseases have been in decline across Oxfordshire. However, these diseases remain a threat but their impact can be reduced further by good surveillance and information, early identification and swift action basic cleanliness, hand washing and good food hygiene.

This chapter reports on the most important diseases one by one.

1. Health Care Associated Infections (HCAIs)

Infections caused by superbugs like Methicillin Resistant *Staphylococcus Aureus* (MRSA) and *Clostridium difficile* (*C.diff*.) remain an important cause of sickness and death, both in hospitals and in the community. However numbers of infections **can and have been** reduced through considerable focussed effort in this County.

a) Methicillin Resistant Staphylococcus Aureus (MRSA)

MRSA is a bacterium found commonly on the skin. If it gains entry into the blood stream (e.g. through invasive procedures or chronic wounds) it can cause blood poisoning (bacteraemias). It can be difficult to treat in people who are already very unwell so we continue to look for the causes of the infection and to identify measures to further reduce our numbers. The reduction in MRSA bacteraemia continued its downward trend seen since 2002-3. **This is an impressive achievement for healthcare in Oxfordshire**. Success has been due to improved detection, improved cleanliness, improved clinical procedures, focussed management action and strict surveillance.

Figure 15 - MRSA cases in Oxfordshire
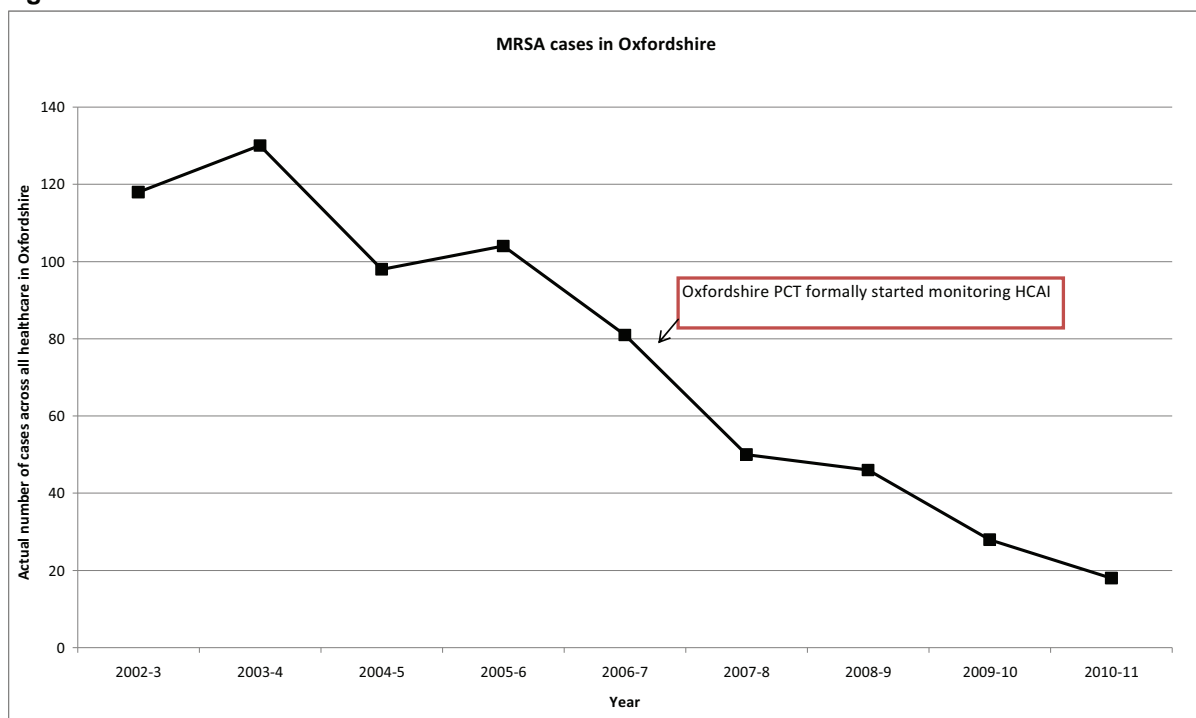
b) *Clostridium difficile* (*C.diff*)

Clostridium difficile is a bacterium that causes mild to severe diarrhoea which is potentially life-threatening especially in the elderly and infirm. This bacterium commonly lives harmlessly in some people's intestines but commonly used broad spectrum antibiotics can disturb the balance of bacteria in the gut which results in the *C.diff* bacteria producing illness.

A focussed approach on the prevention of this infection is resulting in a steady reduction in cases since 2007/08.

Figure 16 - Clostridium Difficile Infections in Oxfordshire

Clostridium difficile Infection cases in Oxfordshire 2007-11
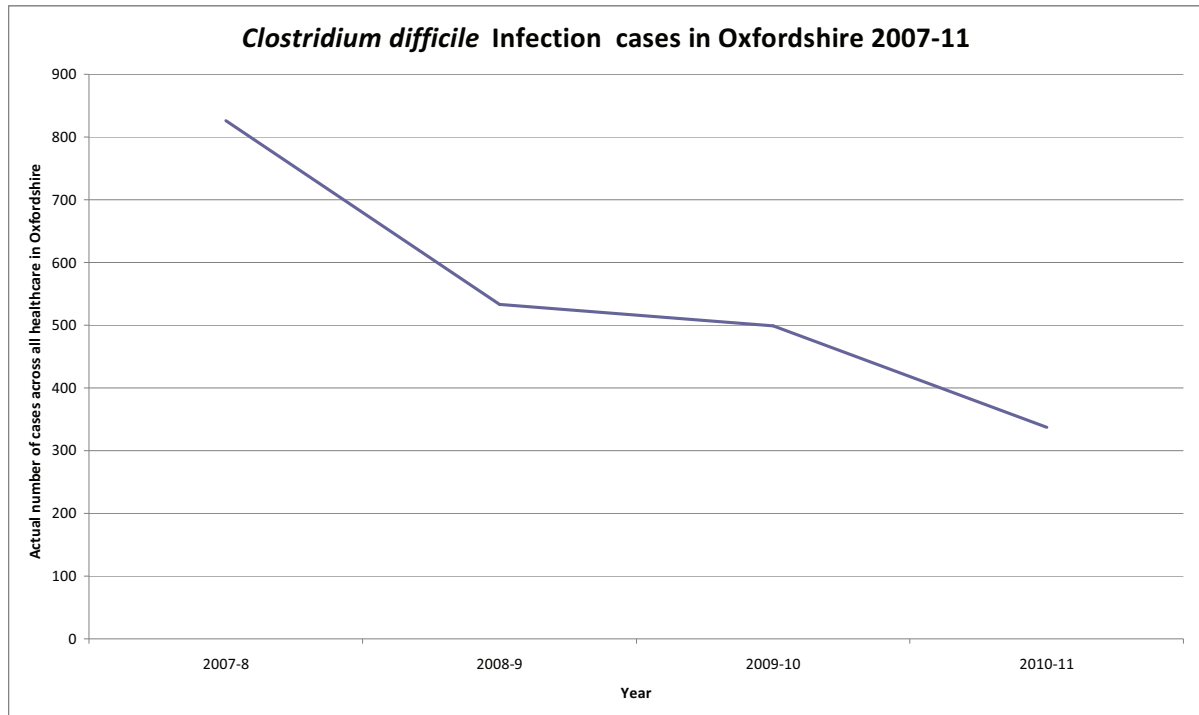
Work continues in the Oxfordshire health economy to reduce inappropriate antibiotic use, and in healthcare settings improve the speed of isolation of suspected cases and cleanliness of the environment.

2. Tuberculosis (TB) in Oxfordshire

TB is a bacterial infection caused by *Mycobacterium tuberculosis* which mainly affects the lungs but which can spread to many other parts of the body including the bones and nervous system. If it is not treated, an active TB infection can be fatal as it damages the lungs to such an extent that the individual cannot breathe.

In Oxfordshire, the number of cases of TB in 2010 was 61 (28 with lung disease and 33 with other TB). The small increase in numbers in 2010 is related to our success in identifying TB in non-UK born population rather than as a threat to the Public Health.

Figure 17 - Tuberculosis incidence rate in Oxfordshire

Year	Number of Cases	Rate per 100,000 population
2006	53	8.4
2007	76	12
2008	56	8.8
2009	55	8.6
2010	61	9.5

Over the past 4 years the rates of new cases occurring, and the number of cases, has remained highest in Oxford City and Cherwell District Council. The county average rate for new cases is consistently lower than the UK rate. **This is a good achievement.**

Figure 18 - TB incidence rate by Local Authority, Oxfordshire, 2010

Local Authority	Cases	Population	Rate per 100,000 population
Cherwell	14	139,200	10.1
Oxford	32	149,300	21.4
South Oxfordshire	4	130,600	3.1
Vale of White Horse	6	118,700	5.1
West Oxfordshire	5	102,500	4.9
UK			13.9

Source: Enhanced TB Surveillance System
Prepared by: Thames Valley Health Protection Unit

The Chief Medical Officer has set local services a target of recording all TB cases and completing successful treatment in 85% of cases. Oxfordshire's successful treatment rates have risen to 94.5% in 2009 (above the Thames Valley average) compared with 84.2% in 2007 and 89.3% in 2008. High completion rates are an important indicator of good control. This year has seen the TB service introduce an even greater degree of accessibility helping improve the response times to TB.

3. Other Diseases Preventable by Immunisation

a) Childhood immunisations

Immunisation is the most cost-effective medical public health intervention. Levels of immunisation for childhood diseases in Oxfordshire continue to improve, with uptake now amongst the highest levels in the country. The work which has been on-going around data collection and record keeping, involving general practice, community and PCT staff, is resulting in more children being fully immunised.

The new Child Health Information System which went 'live' in mid February 2010 is an absolutely essential tool for keeping information accurate and quality high. The small number of children who are not immunised can now be followed up individually and offered immunisation.

b) Measles Mumps and Rubella vaccine (MMR)

Uptake of this immunisation has risen by 6% over the last year and Oxfordshire's levels are the best in the Region. The importance of this is underlined by considering measles as an example:

In the absence of vaccination there would be approximately 8,000 cases of measles per year on average in Oxfordshire. Of these, approximately 40 people would suffer convulsions as a complication, 8 encephalitis and an average of 1 person per year would die.

The chart below shows the good success we have had in Oxfordshire overall in immunising our children against measles, mumps, rubella, diphtheria tetanus and polio. We will need to ensure that the downturn in the last quarter's data is reversed.

Figure 19 - Childhood Immunisations
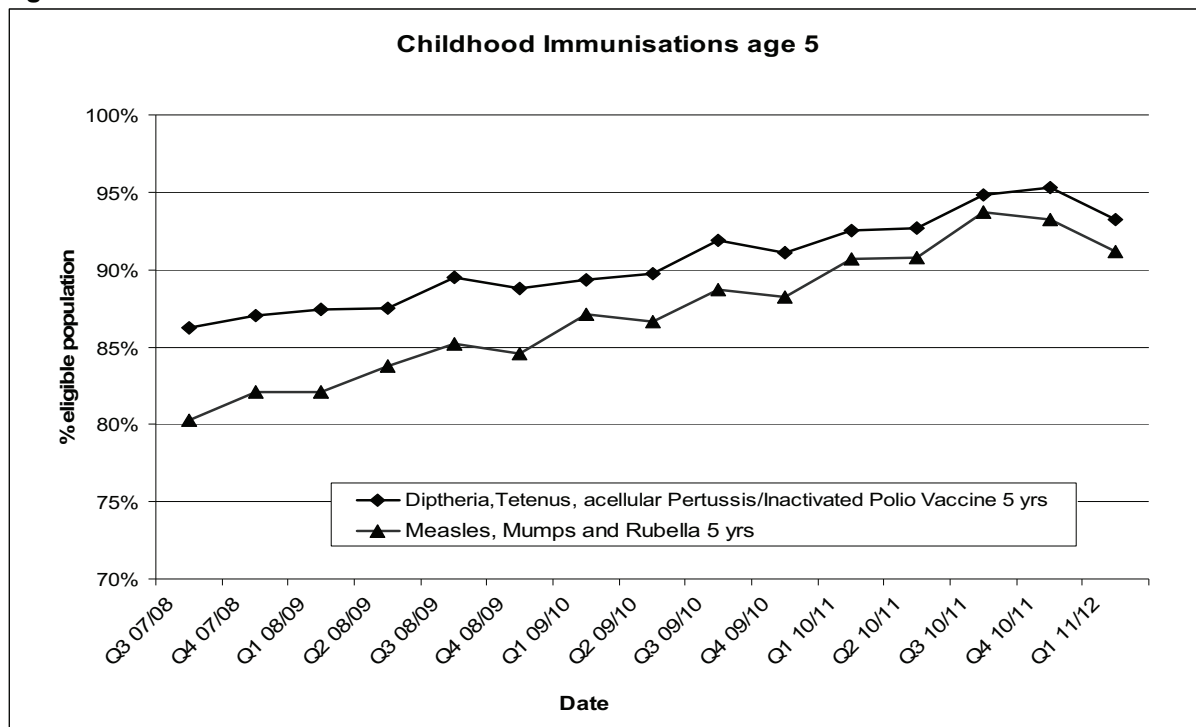
c) Human Papilloma Virus vaccine (HPV): preventing cervical cancer

The problem with human papilloma virus (HPV) is that it may go on to cause cervical cancers. It is so common that at least 50% of sexually active men and women get it at some point in their lives although only a handful of the women affected go on to develop cervical cancer.

There is no treatment for the virus itself but a highly effective vaccine is available that protects against HPV types 16 and 18, the types most which between them cause over 70% of all cervical cancers. **HPV vaccination will save the lives of an estimated 400 women each year in the UK with 4 lives saved per year in Oxfordshire.**

We are currently immunising the 3rd cohort of girls with HPV vaccination – these were students in school year 8 during 2010/11 – the uptake for the whole course of 3 injections is expected to be at least 90% in this age group. The catch up programme, offering HPV to all girls up to the age of 18 years, took place during the academic year 2009/10.

This new vaccine is a significant step forward in the prevention of cancer.

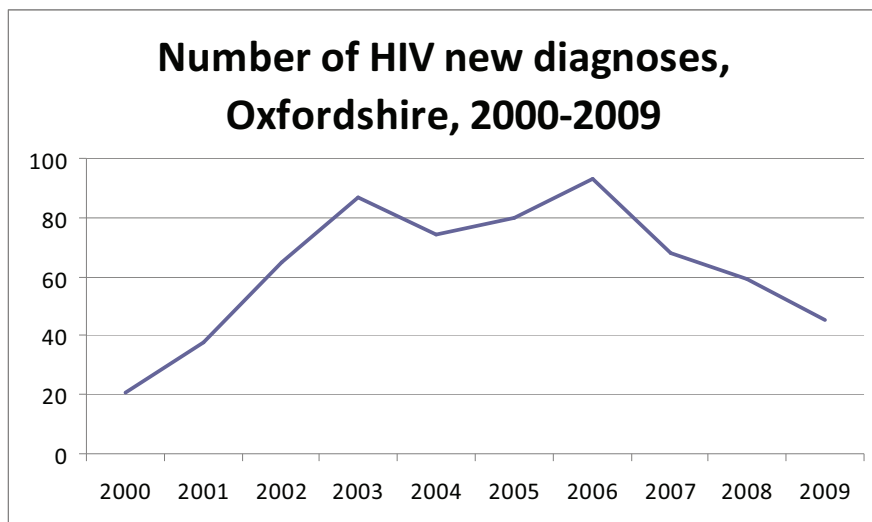## 4. Sexually transmitted infections

a) HIV & AIDS

HIV continues to be one of the most important communicable diseases in the UK. It is an infection associated with serious morbidity, high costs of treatment and care, and significant mortality.

It affects men <u>and</u> women, straight <u>and</u> gay, can be acquired in the UK or abroad and the best form of protection is still through 'safer sex' techniques.

In 2009, there were 214 new diagnoses of HIV in Thames Valley which is a 19% reduction from 2008. This is a good result. Of these new diagnoses 45 were new HIV diagnoses in Oxfordshire. The Oxfordshire figures continue to fall. We continue to work in partnership to get the prevention message across.

Figure 20 - Number of new HIV diagnosis reported in Oxfordshire, 2000-2009

### Number of HIV new diagnoses, Oxfordshire, 2000-2009

b) Sexual Health

It is important to monitor sexually transmitted diseases carefully to watch for increases in disease, the vast majority of which are preventable through taking basic 'safe sex' precautions. This is an important area to address because if Sexually Transmitted diseases are left undetected and untreated they may result in serious complications such as infertility in later life.

It is heartening to see that all the major sexually transmitted diseases fell during the last year. Chlamydia and genital warts remain the most common although there have been decreases in Chlamydia cases over both 2008 and 2009 from a highpoint in 2007.

Figure 21 - Diagnosed sexually transmitted infections for Oxfordshire residents 2004-2010
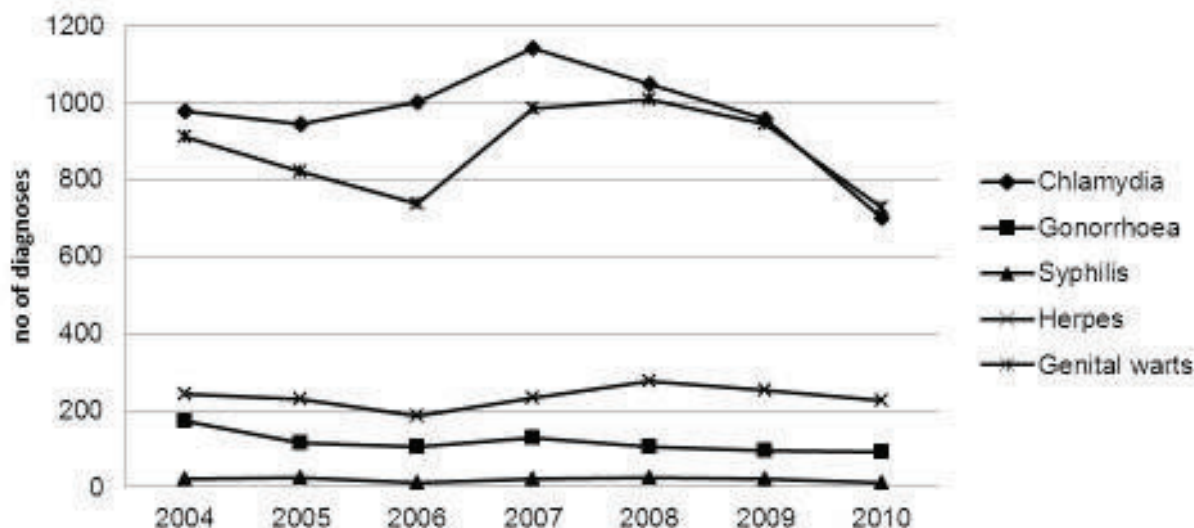
Is Fighting Killer Diseases Still a Priority for Oxfordshire?

Improved surveillance and good teamwork with the Health Protection Agency mean that all the major killer infectious diseases are in decline…...for now.

However, this is a trend that can quickly be reversed and it is imperative that we remain vigilant to the threats posed by new diseases emerging, old diseases developing resistance to treatment and peoples behaviour becoming more risky.

Killer communicable diseases are well managed in Oxfordshire but remain an ever-present threat. Constant vigilance is required and careful management will give us the best chance to keep these infections at bay.

This topic must always remain a top priority in order to protect the public health of Oxfordshire.

What Progress has been made Against Recommendations in the Previous Four Annual reports?

All the recommendations from the previous DPH annual reports have been met. Services, surveillance and management of diseases have been steadily improving over the last 4 years.

Recommendations

1. Maintain vigilance and priority during reorganisation
The Director of Public Health and the local Health Protection Agency must work closely during the forthcoming national reorganisation of public health services to maintain surveillance of communicable diseases during 2011/12/13 and take appropriate steps to control these diseases and any new emerging killer diseases.

2. The need to Report on these figures in Public
The Director of Public Health should report on killer infections and infectious diseases in subsequent annual reports.

Documents and Sources of Information used to produce this Report

Joint Strategic Needs Assessment versions 1 - 4
Public Health Surveillance dashboard
Health Protection Agency Infectious Disease data
Oxfordshire Safer Communities Partnerships Alcohol Strategy Group basket of indicators for Oxfordshire
The Child Poverty Needs Assessment for Oxfordshire
Oxfordshire Children and Young Peoples plan indicators
Oxfordshire PCT Performance data
GP Consortia Information packs – March 2011
Learned journals
Data from Govt Departments
Oxfordshire safer communities safer communities partnership performance framework

Acknowledgements

Division(s): N/A

COUNCIL – 20 MARCH 2012

PAY POLICY STATEMENT

Report by Head of Human Resources

Introduction and context

1.   The Localism Act 2011 requires that all councils agree and publish a pay policy statement by the end of financial year 2011-12. The Act lays down requirements on the content of the statement. This requirement is supplemented by detailed guidance from the Department for Communities and Local Government entitled 'Openness and Accountability in Local Pay: Guidance under Section 40 of the Localism Act'.

2.   In addition, the Code of Recommended Practice for Local Authorities on Data Transparency requires that Councils publish prescribed information on senior pay, jobs and organisational structures. The definition of senior pay under the Code is wider than the top management team and includes senior managers earning more than £58,200 per annum. Some of this information is already published each year in the Council's Statement of Accounts. Full details of the pay of individual managers, as required by the Act, will also be published in accordance with requirements.

3.   The Council has for many years managed its pay by adopting balanced terms and conditions of employment and by exercising a range of effective managerial rules and processes which have allowed services to operate efficiently within the budgetary constraints which apply. Bench-marking information is available at Annex 1. The Council welcomes this fresh opportunity to be open and accountable about the management of pay and seeks to publish a Pay Policy Statement which embraces the spirit and the letter of the new legislation and guidance.

4.   In summary the pay policy statement must as a minimum include details of the Council's policy on:
  •   The remuneration of its Chief Officers;
  •   The remuneration of its lowest paid employees;
  •   The relationship between the remuneration of its chief Officers and other Officers.

Current Pay Policy Statement

5.   The Pay Policy Statement at Annex 2 brings together current Oxfordshire County Council arrangements and policies into one document. It fulfils the

requirements set down by the relevant legislation, codes etc. This Pay Policy Statement will be reviewed by the Council annually.

6. The Chief Executive and Directors are currently paid on spot point salaries under a two-yearly review of pay related to average pay in the south east and neighbouring County Councils. Other senior managers are paid on four point grades using appropriate job evaluation systems. Cost of living reviews are negotiated annually by the relevant national joint councils. Bonuses and performance related pay are not paid. Changes to grades of senior officers are currently approved by Democracy and Organisation Committee Gradings Sub-Committee.

7. The Chief Executive and Director's pay was last increased in 2007. Pay was reviewed locally in accordance with the policy in 2009 but a decision was taken by Senior Officers not to accept any increase due to the budgetary situation. Pay was not reviewed in 2011 as the council had adopted a freeze for other staff. The last cost of living pay rise was made at 1 April 2008 so, in 2012-13 it will be four years since the Chief Executive, Directors and related officers have received a cost of living pay rise. Local Government (Green Book) staff have not received a cost of living pay rise for three years.

8. Following local negotiations and consultations with Trade Unions, Oxfordshire has implemented a further freeze on incremental rises for those earning over £21,000 pa together with a general reduction in redundancy compensation rates and a reduction in car allowances to 35 pence per mile, which is below the Inland Revenue 'All Car' mileage rate.

9. However, additional to these measures, in order to meet its required financial savings, the Council has reduced its overall staffing numbers since 1 April 2010 by over 19%. Senior manager numbers have been reduced by over 40% in the same period - these reductions involved removal of layers of management and increased spans of control in some areas.

10. Although Oxfordshire is subject to the difficult national economic situation it remains a relatively prosperous employment market and the Council must remain competitive in the levels of pay and terms and conditions of employment it offers in order to recruit and retain good quality staff.

11. Benchmarking data on pay and severance is attached at Annex 1. This shows that Oxfordshire's current levels of pay are below the benchmark level for the south east region. Oxfordshire's severance arrangements are shown to be in line with other Councils and relatively modest in terms of redundancy payment calculator.

Future Pay Policies and Accountability

12. The pay policy statement must be reviewed and re-published every year. Information published in accordance with the Data Transparency Code will be updated regularly.

13.   In order to undertake this review it is proposed to introduce a Remuneration Committee which will be a stand-alone committee reporting directly to full Council with a composition which reflects the political balance of the Council. The committee will have the benefit of independent pay advice.   This Remuneration Committee will make recommendations to Council regarding next year's Statement.

14.   Relevant trade unions will be consulted fully on changes to the Pay Policy Statement.

RECOMMENDATIONS

15.   The Council is RECOMMENDED to approve:

(a)   the current Pay Policy Statement at Annex 2 to this report.

(b)   approve the creation of the Remuneration Committee as set out in paragraph 13 of the report which will make recommendations to Council regarding future Pay Policy Statements.

STEVE MUNN
Head of Human Resources

Contact Officer: Sue Corrigan (01865) 810280

Background Papers:
'Openness and Accountability in local pay: Guidance under section 40 of the Localism Act', Department for Communities and Local Government;
'The Code of Recommended Practice for local Authorities on Data Transparency'.

March 2012

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Benchmark Information

Senior Pay

Post	Oxfordshire County Council Salary £	Median for County Councils £	Median for South East £
Chief Executive	182,431	189,158	210,000
Director for Children, Education & Families	137,500	134,000	161,555
Director for Environment & Economy	128,194	128,194	140,000
Director for Social & Community Services	128,194	131,608	150,858
Deputy Directors	88,037–97,180	118,000*	105,543*

Source: Senior Executive Pay in Local Government 2011 published by IDS
Note: Only figures where a representative number of authorities are included have been used.
      *Based on figures published for Deputy Directors in Social and Community Services.

Early Retirement and Redundancy Compensation
How redundancy pay is calculated

Method of calculation	Oxfordshire County Council	% of authorities
Using actual salary	Yes	94%
Using statutory maximum figure	No	2%
Other	No	5%

Lump sum compensation for redundancy

Method of calculation	Oxfordshire County Council	% of authorities
X 1.5	1.5	24%
X 2		32%
X 2.5		4%
X 3		2%
Using other formula		38%

Augmented membership under the Local Government Pension Scheme for redundancy

Method of calculation	Oxfordshire County Council	% of authorities
No	No	88%
Yes in some cases		9%
Yes in all cases		4%

Augmented membership under the Local Government Pension Scheme for efficiency of the service retirements

Method of calculation	Oxfordshire County Council	% of authorities
No	No	88%
Yes in some cases		10%
Yes in all cases		2%

Source: Local Government Group Report of the Early Retirement and Redundancy Compensation Survey 2011

Footnote: Figures are for non-schools staff

Oxfordshire County Council
Pay Policy Statement

<u>Preamble.</u>

1. This Pay Policy Statement fulfils Oxfordshire County Council's legal obligations under The Localism Act 2011. It has been updated to incorporate current guidance. The Council will also publish details of its senior pay, salary and organisational structure information as required by the Code of Recommended Practice for Local Authorities on Data Transparency.

2. This Statement will be published on the Council's public website and will be available in other formats upon request.

3. Procedural and approval requirements set down in the Council's Constitution will be applied as required.

4. This Policy Statement does not cover school employees.

<u>Reward Policy.</u>

5. Oxfordshire County Council aims to develop and implement reward systems and structures which meet the following requirements:

- Allow the Council to recruit and retain high calibre employees in order to provide high quality services.
- Maintain levels of pay which are in line with the Council's financial policies and provide value for money.
- Are open, transparent and accountable.
- Are fair and consistent.

6. High levels of performance are expected from employees and where standards are not satisfactory prompt managerial action will be taken to improve performance. This may include with-holding incremental rises or disciplinary/capability action in accordance with agreed procedures.

<u>Pay Design.</u>

7. The Chief Executive, Chief Officers[1], Deputy Chief Officers and related staff will be employed under the relevant Joint National Council terms and conditions. Where the Council varies these terms and conditions locally this will be subject to approval by the Remuneration Committee.

8. The pay of the Chief Executive, Chief Officers, Deputy Chief Officers and related staff will be subject to review every two years. Information relating to

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[1] For the purposes of this Statement the Assistant Chief Executive and Chief Fire Officers are treated as Chief Officers.

the pay of similar posts in relevant other local authorities will be taken into account to ensure that pay is sufficient to recruit and retain key senior staff but is not excessive in comparison with other local authorities. Bonuses and performance related pay will not be paid.

9. Grading of Deputy Chief Officers and related staff, other than in Fire and Rescue, will be subject to an appropriate job evaluation process.

10. Where the Chief Executive or other officer receives election fees these will be shown separately to salary. These fees are set annually by the Council's Democracy & Organisation Committee. In addition, a comprehensive review of election fees is undertaken by the Democracy & Organisation Committee every four years in readiness for the County quadrennial elections.

11. Grading structures and changes to salaries and remuneration for the Chief Executive, Chief Officers and Deputy Chief Officers will be considered by the new Remuneration Committee. Salary packages for a new post in excess of £100,000 p.a. will be subject to formal approval by full Council.

12. In accordance with publication requirements, a table showing information on the current pay of the Chief Executive, Chief Officers, Deputy Chief Officers and other officers, individual contractors and interims earning over £58,200 pa, will be published on the web site by 31 March 2012. Chief Officer Pay is already available. All allowances and other payments will be shown. Bonuses and performance related pay are not currently paid. Expenses are based on nationally agreed levels except car mileage which is currently 35 pence per mile.

13. The schemes of terms and conditions of employment and grading structures which apply to all groups of employees other than the Chief Executive, Chief Officers and Deputy Chief Officers are identified in Appendix 1.

14. The highest paid officer in the Council currently receives £182,431p.a. including all elements of pay other than election fees. The current lowest full time salary paid by the Council is £12,312 per annum[2]. The Council's median annual salary is £27,052 per annum. This multiplies 6.74 times into the annual salary of the highest paid.

15. Changes to the grades of all groups of employees other than Chief Executive and Chief Officers will be subject to Job Evaluation Schemes in accordance with the Constitution and national terms and conditions as applicable. Market supplements may be paid in circumstances where they are required to attract or retain appropriate staff where a case has been agreed by the Grading Moderation Panel which is responsible for the local determination of job grades.

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[2] The lowest paid salary is based on the bottom point of the 'Green Book' scales which is the lowest normal pay point – currently payable to some cleaning staff. It does not include apprentices due to their trainee status or staff who have transferred in to the Council under TUPE protected rates.

16. Grading structures for all groups of employees will be implemented in line with agreed published pay scales and agreed relevant national and local terms and conditions of employment listed in Appendix 1.

17. Annual pay awards will be implemented in line with national negotiations for all employee groups except adult tutors and apprentices, for whom local arrangements will apply.

<u>Severance Payments</u>

18. Severance payments for all employees will comply with the Council's Retirement Policy in respect of pension. The Oxfordshire County Council Redundancy Scheme, which is currently one and a half times statutory entitlement based on actual pay, will apply where redundancy payments are due.

19. Where other severance payments are appropriate such payments will be approved by the Head of Human Resources, Solicitor to the Council and the Chief Financial Officer, and will be the subject of a Compromise Agreement for the purpose of compromising any compensation for which the council may otherwise be legally liable.

20. All employees who have received a redundancy payment in relation to the termination of their contracts of employment will be subject to the provisions of the Redundancy Modification Order and will be subject to Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS) Regulations or other pension scheme regulations where applicable. Information on severance payments paid is available at Appendix 1.

21. The current employer's pension contribution rates are set down in Appendix 2.

22. Severance payments are published as required by 'The Code of Recommended Practice for Local Authorities on Data Transparency'.

23. The Council's Retirement Policy Statement sets down its policy on payment of pensions. This policy Statement is reproduced as Appendix 3 of the Pay Policy Statement.

<u>Review of the Policy.</u>

24. This policy Statement will be reviewed by the Remuneration Committee who will make recommendations for the approval of full Council annually.

Steve Munn
Head of Human Resources
March 2012

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Terms and Conditions of Employment and Grading Structures.

Joint Negotiating Committee for Chief Executives
Effective from 1 April 2008

Pay Scale/Salary: £182,431 pa

Joint Negotiating Committee for Chief Officers
Effective from 1 April 2008

Grade	Pay Scale
Director Children, Education & Families	£137,500
Director	£128,194
Assistant Chief Executive	£106,282
Monitoring Officer	Grade A (see below)

HAY Grades
Effective from 1 April 2008

Grade	Pay Scale
Grade A	£88,037-£91,082-£94,131-£97,180
Grade B	£75,461-£78,890-£82,317-£85,750
Grade C	£62,881-£66,692-£70,500-£74,317
Grade D	£55,542-£56,439-£57,354-£58,286-£60,598

National Joint Council for Local Government Services (Green book)
Effective 1 April 2009

Grade	G1	G2	G3	G4
SCP - £	05 - £12,312 06 - £12,749	07 - £12,787 08 - £13,189	09 - £13,589 10 - £13,874 11 - £14,733	11 - £14,733 12 - £15,039 13 - £15,444
Grade	**G5**	**G6**	**G7**	**G8**
SCP - £	14 - £15,725 15 - £16,054 16 - £16,440 17 - £16,830	18 - £17,161 19 - £17,802 20 - £18,453 21 - £19,126	22 - £19,621 23 - £20,198 24 - £20,858 25 - £21,519	26 - £22,221 27 - £22,958 28 - £23,708 29 - £24,646
Grade	**G9**	**G10**	**G11**	**G12**
SCP - £	29 - £24,646 30 - £25,472 31 - £26,276 32 - £27,052	33 - £27,849 34 - £28,636 35 - £29,236 36 - £30,011	37 - £30,851 38 - £31,754 39 - £32,800 40 - £33,661	41 - £34,549 42 - £35,430 43 - £36,313 44 - £37,206

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Grade	G13	G14	G15	G16
SCP - £	45 - £38,042 46 - £38,961 47 - £39,855 48 - £40,741	49 - £41,616 50 - £42,505 51 - £43,396 52 - £44,296	53 - £45,205 54 - £46,111 55 - £47,013 56 - £47,916	57 - £48,836 58 - £49,738 59 - £50,647 60 - £51,556
Grade	G17	G18		
SCP - £	61 - £52,462 62 - £53,374 63 - £54,280 64 - £55,189	65 - £56,097 66 - £57,003 67 - £57,928 68 - £58,869		

National Joint Council for Chief and Assistant Chief Fire Officers (Gold Book)
Effective 1 January 2009

Grade	Pay Scale
Chief Fire Officer	£120,645
Deputy Chief Fire Officer	£97,722
Assistant Chief Fire Officer	£88,071

National Joint Council for Fire Brigades (Grey Book)
Effective 1 July 2009

Firefighting Roles

	Basic annual £	Basic hourly rate £	Overtime rate £
Firefighter			
Trainee	21,157	9.66	14.49
Development	22,038	10.06	15.09
Competent	28,199	12.88	19.32
Crew Manager			
Development	29,971	13.69	20.54
Competent	31,263	14.28	21.42
Watch Manager			
Development	31,940	14.58	21.87
Competent A	32,827	14.99	22.49
Competent B	34,961	15.96	23.94
Station Manager			
Development	36,365	16.60	24.90
Competent A	37,456	17.10	25.65
Competent B	40,109	18.31	27.47

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Group Manager	41,881	19.12	Not applicable
Development	50,642	19.70	Not applicable
Competent A	53,934	21.20	Not applicable
Competent B			
Area Manager			
Development	49,167	22.45	Not applicable
Competent A	50,642	23.12	Not applicable
Competent B	53,934	24.63	Not applicable

Protected Pay Point	Basic annual £	Basic hourly rate £	Overtime rate £
Station Officer/Watch Manager B: Protected Pay Point L	36,752	16.78	25.17

Retained Duty System

	(1) £ per annum	(2) £ per annum	(3) £ per annum	(4) £ per occasion
Firefighter				
Trainee	2,116	1,058	9.66	3.70
Development	2,204	1,103	10.06	3.70
Competent	2,821	1,410	12.88	3.70
Crew Manager				
Development	2,998	1,499	13.69	3.70
Competent	3,127	1,563	14.28	3.70
Watch Manager				
Development	3,193	1,598	14.58	3.70
Competent A	3,284	1,642	14.99	3.70
Competent B	3,496	1,749	15.96	3.70
Station Manager				
Development	3,637	1,818	16.60	3.70
Competent A	3,745	1,872	17.10	3.70
Competent B	4,012	2,005	18.31	3.70
Group Manager				
Development	4,189	2,094	19.12	3.70
Competent A	4,313	2,158	19.70	3.70
Competent B	4,643	2,322	21.20	3.70

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Area Manager				
Development	4,917	2,459	22.45	3.70
Competent A	5,065	2,532	23.12	3.70
Competent B	5,394	2,697	24.63	3.70

Column 1 shows the full annual retainer
Column 2 shows the retainer for employees on the day crewing duty system
Column 3 shows the hourly rate for work undertaken
Column 4 shows the disturbance payment per call-out

Control Specific Roles

	Basic annual £	Basic hourly rate £	Overtime rate £
Firefighter			
Trainee	20,099	9.18	13.77
Development	20,935	9.56	14.34
Competent	26,790	12.23	18.35
Crew Manager			
Development	28,472	13.00	19.50
Competent	29,700	13.56	20.34
Watch Manager			
Development	30,345	13.86	20.79
Competent A	31,187	14.24	21.36
Competent B	33,211	15.16	22.74
Station Manager			
Development	34,547	15.77	23.66
Competent A	35,583	16.25	24.38
Competent B	38,104	17.40	26.10
Group Manager			
Development	39,788	18.17	Not applicable
Competent A	40,980	18.71	Not applicable
Competent B	44,108	20.14	Not applicable

Protected Pay Point	Basic annual £	Basic hourly rate £	Overtime rate £
Fire Control Officer: Protected Pay Point L	34,879	15.93	23.90
Principal Fire Control Office: Protected Pay Point P	44,420	20.28	Not applicable

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Non-operational staff

	£ per annum
Fire Control Operator equivalent	
During first six months	18,019
After six months and during 2nd year	18,817
During 3rd year	19,712
During 4th year	20,681
During 5th year	22,524
Leading Fire Control Operator equivalent	24,121
Senior Fire Control Operator equivalent	
During 1st year in rank	24,741
During 2nd year in rank	25,678

Junior Firefighters

	£ per annum
Aged 16	9,787
Aged 17	10,518
Aged 18	21,157

Soulbury Committee (Blue Book)
Effective 1 September 2009

Educational Psychologists – Scale A

Spine Point	Salary
1	£33,934
2	£35,656
3	£37,378
4	£39,100
5	£40,822
6	£42,544
7	£44,165
8	£45,786
9	£47,305*
10	£48,825*
11	£50,243*

Notes: Salary scales to consist of six consecutive points, based on the duties and responsibilities attaching to posts and the need to recruit, retain and motivate staff.
* Extension to scale to accommodate structured professional assessment points.

Senior & Principal Educational Psychologists – Scale B

Spine Point	Salary
1	£42,544
2	£44,165
3	£45,786*
4	£47,305
5	£48,825
6	£50,243
7	£50,825
8	£51,912
9	£52,989
10	£54,085
11	£55,159
12	£56,255
13	£57,370
14	£58,477**
15	£59,575**
16	£60,693**
17	£61,848**
18	£62,942**

Notes: Salary scales to consist of not more than four consecutive points, based on the duties and responsibilities attaching to posts and the need to recruit, retain and motivate staff. *   Normal minimum point for the Principle Educational Psychologist undertaking the full range of duties at this level. **   Extension to range to accommodate discretionary scale points and structured professional assessments.

Trainee Educational Psychologists

Spine point	Salary
1	£21,801
2	£23,397
3	£24,991
4	£26,587
5	£28,182
6	£29,777

Assistant Educational Psychologists

Spine point	Salary
1	£26,799
2	£27,893
3	£28,988
4	£30,076

Effective 1 September 2009

Grade	Spinal Point	Salary)
ADGR1	20	19,663.00
ADGR2	21	20,616.33
ADGR2	22	21,579.33
ADGR3	23	22,542.00
ADGR3	25	23,753.00
ADGR3	27	25,002.00
ADGR3	29	26,269.33
ADGR4	30	27,992.33
ADGR4	31	29,048.67
ADGR4	32	30,089.67
ADGR4	33	31,134.00

Teachers (Burgundy Book)
Effective 1 September 2010

Main Pay Scale	TPA Code	Per Annum	Per Day
TMS1	WOO	£21,588	£110.71
TMS2	WOO	£23,295	£119.46
TMS3	WOO	£25,168	£129.07
TMS4	WOO	£27,104	£138.99
TMS5	WOO	£29,240	£149.95
TMS6	WOO	£31,552	£161.81
Upper Pay Scale	**TPA Code**	**Per Annum**	**Per Day**
UPS1	POO	£34,181	£175.29
UPS2	POO	£35,447	£181.78
UPS3	POO	£36,756	£188.49
Instructors Pay Scale	**TPA Code**	**Per Annum**	**Per Day**
UNQ1	UQ04	£15,817	£81.11
UNQ2	UQ04	£17,657	£90.55
UNQ3	UQ04	£19,497	£99.98
UNQ4	UQ04	£21,336	£109.42
UNQ5	UQ04	£23,177	£118.86
UNQ6	UQ04	£25,016	£128.29

Teaching and Learning Responsibility allowances

TLR2 minimum £2,535	TLR2 maximum £6,197
TLR1 minimum £7,323	TLR1 maximum £12,393

The School / Service sets the actual pay points within these ranges but there must be gaps between pay points of over £1500. Most schools use the standard OCC rates for allowances which are as follows: TLR2 (1) 2535, TLR2 (2) 4225, TLR2 (3a) 5914 or TLR2 (3b) 6197, TLR1 (1) 7323, TLR1 (2) 9012, TLR1 (3) 10702, TLR1 (4) 12393.

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SEN Allowance 1 £2,001		SEN Allowance 2 £3,954	
Excellent Teacher Pay Scale		£39,697 to £52,090	
Leadership Pay Spine	**Per Annum**	**Leadership Pay Spine**	**Per Annum**
L1*	£37,461	L23	£64,367
L2*	£38,400	L24	£65,963
L3*	£39,358	L25	£67,602
L4*	£40,339	L26	£69,275
L5*	£41,343	L27	£70,991
L6*	£42,379	L28	£72,752
L7*	£43,521	L29	£74,554
L8*	£44,525	L30	£76,409
L9*	£45,637	L31	£78,298
L10*	£46,808	L32	£80,244
L11*	£48,024	L33	£82,238
L12*	£49,130	L34	£84,271
L13*	£50,359	L35	£86,365
L14*	£51,614	L36	£88,504
L15*	£52,900	L37	£90,704
L16*	£54,305	L38	£92,948
L17*	£55,553	L39	£95,213
L18*	£56,950	L40	£97,590
L19	£58,362	L41	£100,028
L20	£59,809	L42	£102,534
L21	£61,288	L43	£105,097
L22	£62,811	L43	£105,097
* Means that this is also the pay point for an advanced skills teacher			

National Joint Council for Workshops for the Blind
Effective 1 April 2009

Probationary Grade: £12,312 pa
Substantive Grade: £12,410 pa

Apprentices
Effective

	Intermediate (GCCSE Grades D-G)			Advance Apprentice (GCCSE Grades A*-C)		
Age	16-18	19+	21+	Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3
Up to 6 months	£7,003	£7,003	£7,003	£12,312	£12,787	£13,589
6-12 months	£7,500	£7,500	£7,500	Progression through grade		
After 12 months	£9,466	£9,466	£11,410	Determined via job evaluation		

Pension Contribution Rates

Local Government Pension Scheme

From 1st April 2011 contribution rates are calculated on the bands indicated below based on whole time equivalent salary and pensionable allowances in accordance with the following table:

Band	Range (based on pensionable earnings)	Contribution Rate - Employee	Contribution Rate - Employer
1	£0 - £12,900.99 pa	5.5%	19.3%
2	£12,901.00 - £15,100.99	5.8%	19.3%
3	£15,101.00 - £19,400.99	5.9%	19.3%
4	£19,401.00 - £32,400.99	6.5%	19.3%
5	£32,401.00 - £43,300.99	6.8%	19.3%
6	£43,301.00 - £81,100.99	7.2%	19.3%
7	£81,100.00 and above	7.5%	19.3%

Fire Brigades Pension Scheme

Band	Range	Contribution Rate - Employee	Contribution Rate - Employer
1	All Fire Brigade Pension Scheme members apart from retained	11.0%	21.3%
2	Retained and whole-time after April 2006.	8.5%	11.0%

Teachers' Pension Scheme

Band	Applicable to	Contribution Rate - Employee	Contribution Rate - Employer
Single band	All Teachers' Pension Scheme members	6.4%	14.1%

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Retirement Policy Statement

Preamble

Employees are no longer subject to a general retirement date (effective from 1st October 2011). Employment will therefore continue until it is ended by either the employee giving notice or action by the employer for a specified reason such as redundancy or dismissal for conduct or capability reasons.

The Council acknowledges the importance for employees who are planning to retire to achieve a balance between work and other interests. Managers are encouraged to seriously consider requests for flexible working arrangements which are desired as a variation to the existing contract of employment. However, managers reserve the right to refuse requests where there are sound business reasons which require that the job under consideration can only be carried out effectively on its present basis.

Principles

1. This policy

2. applies from 1 October 2011 to all employees who are members of The Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS) or are eligible to join. A separate version of this policy applies to teachers. Uniformed Fire-fighters are covered by a separate policy.

3. An employee who has chosen not to contribute to the Local Government Pension Scheme will receive no pension benefits from the Fund under this scheme upon retirement. Redundancy compensation will be paid where appropriate as set out in Paragraph 15 below.

4. An employee who is aged 60 or older may choose to retire by giving the appropriate notice. Those employees who have a sufficient period of membership in the pension scheme may choose to receive immediate payment of pension, in accordance with Pension regulations. Pension received may be reduced in some circumstances so employees are advised to contact Pension Services for information about any pension entitlement and the arrangements for payment options.

5. An employee who is aged between 55 and 75 may request "flexible retirement" under the LGPS Pension Regulations. This involves continuing to work and either reducing his/her hours of work or accepting a lower paid job within the Council while receiving an immediate payment of pension benefits. These benefits may be reduced or unreduced depending on entitlement. This flexible retirement arrangement will <u>only</u> be available where all of the following apply:

   - Agreement is obtained from Pensions Benefits Sub-Committee,

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see Paragraph 11 below. Each case will be considered on its merits, although an application is unlikely to succeed where there are costs to the Council and the benefits to the service are not explicit.

- There is a mutual agreement between the employee and management that the change in hours or grade can be accommodated and the arrangement is expected to continue for a period on no less than one year.
- The changes to employment result in a reduction in income of 25 per cent or more of the normal pay of the current contracted employment, either by a reduction in hours or a reduction in grade or a combination of both.

6. Retirement with an immediate payment of pension before the age of 65 years may also arise for the reasons set down in paragraphs 10 and 11 below and is subject to the conditions stated.

7. An ex-employee who has retired and is receiving a Local Government Pension will not normally be re-employed by the County Council unless he/she has been selected by a full recruitment process. However, retired employees may register for short-term casual work without further process. All re-employed pensioners and employees who commence employment are required to advise the Authority who pays his/her pension of any new employment as his/her pension may be reduced in accordance with Pension Scheme Regulations and Compensation Regulations.

8. The Council will not at any time augment the pension or membership of employees.

9. Employees are advised to seek guidance about the financial implications of continuing to work and starting to draw a LGPS or personal pension.

Special Retirements

10. In the case of the retirements referred to in paragraphs 10 and 11 below re-deployment to other appropriate employment will be considered and offered as an alternative to retirement where appropriate and available.

Ill Health Retirements

11. An employee who has been certified by an independent Occupational Health Advisor as being permanently incapable of discharging his/her duties or other comparable duties due to ill health or infirmity of body or mind may retire at any age, with immediate payment of a pension in accordance with Pension regulations where sufficient pension contributions have been made.

Other Retirements requiring the Approval of the Democracy & Organisation Committee's Pensions Benefits Sub-Committee

12. Early retirement may be granted <u>for employees aged 55 years and over</u> in the circumstances set out in a) and (c) below, taking into consideration the full cost of the retirement and the best interest of the Council.

   (a) <u>Redundancy, after the Council's Redundancy Procedure has been followed.</u>
   In this case employees will receive immediate payment of their pension entitlement and redundancy compensation will be paid where appropriate in accordance with the Oxfordshire County Council Redundancy Payments Scheme (effective 1 April 2011) which is one and a half times the statutory calculation based on actual pay.

   (b) <u>Where an employee has continuing health problems and it is in the interests of the efficiency of the Council's operations.</u>
   In this case immediate payment of pension will be granted to an employee who does not satisfy the Local Government Pension Scheme criteria for retirement on the grounds of ill health, but who is suffering from a substantial medical or psychiatric condition and whose retirement is recommended by the Council's Occupational Health physician because he/she is likely to be significantly less efficient for the foreseeable future due to health reasons.

   (c) <u>Where an employee has requested flexible retirement and satisfies the criteria in Paragraph 4 above.</u>

13. The Council will not normally agree to early payment of benefits or early retirement on other grounds, including requests from current employees aged 55 to 59 or deferred benefits from ex-employees where there is a cost to the Council. This does not prevent an employee aged 55 to 59 years who wishes to, from leaving the employment of the authority and accessing their pension early or from making a written request to the Sub-Committee. However, such applications will not normally be supported by management and are unlikely to succeed due to the associated costs. Furthermore, benefits will be reduced in any cases which might be agreed unless compassionate grounds apply.

14. The Council reserves its power to agree early retirement in exceptional cases as part of a Compromise Agreement.

Redundancy with no Entitlement to Immediate Payment of Pension Benefits

15. Where a redundant employee has contributed to the LGPS but has no entitlement to immediate payment of pension, he/she will receive redundancy compensation, where appropriate, in accordance with the Oxfordshire County Council Redundancy Payments Scheme (effective from 1 April 2011) which is one and a half times the statutory calculation based

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on actual pay and is not subject to age restrictions.

Disputes Procedure

16.   Where a member of the LGPS has a dispute regarding his/her pension he/she may refer this as appropriate through the County's agreed Raising Concerns at Work Procedure or through the procedures Independent Resolving Disagreements Procedure (IRDP) laid down in the Pension Regulations to the Nominated Person.

Revision of this Policy

17.   This policy will be reviewed within three years of its implementation or earlier if deemed necessary.

Head of Human Resources

August 2011

Division(s): N/A

COUNCIL – 20 MARCH 2012

LOCAL AUTHORITY STANDARDS

Report by Head of Law and Governance

Introduction

1. At its meeting in December 2011, the Standards Committee gave initial consideration to the standards implications of the Localism Act. At that time, the Committee was minded to recommend Council to retain a standards committee under the new regime. However, the Committee met on 5 March 2012 to consider the implications of the Act in more detail and is now making specific recommendations to full Council about the future shape of standards arrangements for the County Council. This report sets out the Committee's recommendations for resolving local complaints against members.

Background

2. The Coalition Government proposals with regards to fulfilling their commitment to abolish the standards regime are now in place. The key changes are:

    a) Abolishing predetermination rule to allow Local Members to speak up on local issues;
    b) Abolition of Standards for England;
    c) Local Councils to make provision for their own local arrangements for maintaining standards;
    d) Requirement to have a Local Code of Conduct (with reduced number of key principles);
    e) Freedom to make their own arrangements for handling and investigating complaints;
    f) Requirement to consult an Independent person;
    g) Limitation of sanctions against misconduct;
    h) Criminal sanction introduced for failing to register and declare a pecuniary interest (with safeguards).

3. The remit of the Government is that Members should be responsible for their own conduct but that they should be answerable to the electorate for their conduct and answerable to the Court if they have broken the law. In many respects it is a return to the pre 1999 position whereby complaints were handled by the Monitoring Officer in close liaison with the Chief Executive and relevant Group Leaders.

4.   The law requires the Council to promote and maintain high standards, to adopt a local Code of Conduct and to have in place arrangements for investigating and deciding on any allegations of a breach of the Code. Therefore, there needs to be agreed arrangements as to how these matters will be dealt with in a proper manner, which is politically neutral and independent from undue influence. The Monitoring Officer has the statutory responsibility for these arrangements and will need to ensure an appropriate procedure is in place.

5.   At the meeting of Standards Committee on 5 March 2012 consideration was given to suggesting a new arrangement which would reflect these aims.

6.   It has not been possible to finalise these arrangements and submit a Code of Conduct for Council's approval as the relevant regulations dealing with the members' register of interests has yet to be published.

Proposal

7.   The Committee is therefore recommending the following arrangement to Council, whereby a standards committee is not reappointed and alternative arrangements are put in place. It is suggested that a member /officer Working Group be set up along the lines of the existing Audit Working Group, thereby creating a pool of members who could be involved in handling complaints about Councillors under any revised Code of Conduct. Its work would be reported to the Audit Committee, giving the assurance of formal Member oversight. The Monitoring Officer would include reference to this work in his Annual Monitoring Report, which already goes to the Audit Committee.

8.   Adopting this arrangement would simply require the slight expansion of the terms of reference of the Audit Committee to reflect its oversight of the standards matters. The advantage is that this avoids the necessity of having an additional statutory Committee solely to deal with standards and becomes part of the wider governance framework whilst still maintaining proper Member oversight and ownership.

9.   In making such a change, and to reflect it more clearly, it might be appropriate to expand the title of the current Audit Committee to the "Audit and Governance Committee". The Audit Committee is well used to handling confidential matters in both an informal and a formal manner and in general terms is 'non-political' in its role and outlook.

10.   The Chief Executive and the Monitoring Officer regard this as the minimum arrangements that should be place in order for the Monitoring Officer to fulfil his statutory obligations as regards Member standards under the Localism Act. This proposal, therefore, has the general support of the Chief Executive, the Monitoring Officer, Group Leaders and the Chairman of the Audit Committee.

RECOMMENDATION

11.   The Standards Committee RECOMMEND Council that:

(a)   a Standards Committee is not appointed under the Localism Act 2011;

(b)   The Audit Committee be renamed as the Audit & Governance Committee and its terms of reference expanded to include overview of member standards;

(c)   a member-officer working group be appointed to enable consideration of standards complaints against members of the Council reporting to the Audit & Governance Committee;

(d)   The Monitoring Officer to submit for Council's approval an appropriate procedure for the handling of complaints.

PETER G CLARK
County Solicitor & Monitoring Officer

Background papers: The Localism Act 2011

Contact Officer: Peter Clark

March 2012

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Division(s): NA

CABINET – 13 MARCH 2012

EQUALITY POLICY 2012-2017

Report by Head of Law and Governance

Introduction

1.   The Equality Policy 2012-2017 sets out how the Council is approaching its responsibilities for ensuring that all residents in Oxfordshire have fair access to services and equal life chances. It also demonstrates how the Council is meeting the requirements placed on public bodies under the Equality Act 2010, including setting equality objectives for the next four years.

2.   A draft of the policy has been out for public consultation since January, and the final policy has been amended to reflect feedback from internal and external stakeholders. To fulfil our legislative requirements, the final policy will be published by 6th April 2012, and progress in implementing it will be monitored and reported as part of the council's overall performance management arrangements.

Requirements of the Equality Act 2010

3.   The Equality Act 2010 places a requirement on public bodies to give due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Act.
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
- Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic, and those who do not.

4.   There is also an Equality Duty that replaces the previous public sector equality duties for disability, ethnicity and gender and covers the following protected characteristics:

- Age
- Disability
- Gender reassignment
- Marriage and civil partnership (but only in respect of eliminating unlawful discrimination)
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Race – this includes ethnic or national origins, colour or nationality
- Religion or belief – this includes lack of belief
- Sex
- Sexual orientation

5. The Equality Duty requires public bodies to consider how the decisions that they make, and the services they deliver, affect people who share different protected characteristics. The Council must publish information by 31st January 2012 to demonstrate that it has done this, and at least annually thereafter.

6. In addition the Council is also required to set specific, measurable equality objectives and publish these, along with an equality policy, by 6th April 2012. There is an expectation that this will follow consultation and should be linked to the information that is published. The equality objectives must be refreshed at least every four years.

Demonstrating Compliance with the Equality Act and specific duties

7. A detailed report has been produced that evidences the wide range of actions the Council is taking to comply with the requirements of the public sector equality duty, and provide examples of how service areas are improving outcomes for people who share the protected characteristics. It also summarises the make-up of Oxfordshire's population in relation to people who share protected characteristics.

8. This information was published on the Council's website before 31st January 2012 as part of demonstrating compliance with the equality duty, and is available at:
www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/cms/public-site/equality-and-cohesion

9. This document includes a general statement of effectiveness in complying with the requirements of the Equality Act. Based on the examples and actions provided it is considered that the council performs very well in meeting the needs of people who share protected characteristics.

10. However, there are a number of areas where there is room for further improvement and these will form the basis of the council's equality objectives for the next four years.

11. The Council is also required to publish information to demonstrate it has considered how its activities as an employer affect people who share different protected characteristics. A separate Equality Duty in Employment Report 2011 has been produced and is available at:
http://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/cms/content/fairness-and-equality-work

Consultation with Stakeholders

12. Public consultation on a draft of the Equality Policy 2012-2017 took place between 19 January and 2 March 2012 (a period of 6 weeks).

13. Details of the written consultation including the draft policy document, supporting information and links to an online survey were placed on the council's intranet site and public website and promoted using home page features and headlines.

14. Key stakeholders were also contacted directly and invited to comment, including all staff and Councillors; district, town and parish councils; other public sector organisations including Thames Valley Police, the Primary Care Trust, schools, universities and the military; voluntary, community and faith sector organisations and charities, including those representing people who share protected characteristics as set out in the Equality Act 2010.

15. A stakeholder workshop took place on 17 February 2012, offering an opportunity to discuss the draft policy and comment in more detail as part of the consultation. A wide range of public, voluntary, community and faith sector organisations and charities were invited, along with some existing service users.

16. In total 21 people attended the stakeholder workshop and 10 responses were received to the online consultation, with a further 2 responses sent by email.

17. A summary of the outcomes of the consultation is attached as Annex 2, with the detailed responses available in the councillor's resource room.

18. Overall, the outcomes of the consultation indicate there was broad support for the council's overall ambition for and approach to equalities. There we some objections expressed about the use of language; the need for clarification and examples of current performance; more consideration of governance and accountability; further explanation of the council's approach to mainstreaming; and the need to manage expectations. The feedback also provided helpful suggestions for how the key issues might be delivered.

Equality Policy 2012-2017

19. Attached to this report is the Equality Policy 2012-2017. It sets out the Councils ambition for equality of opportunity as follows:

"Oxfordshire County Council is committed to making Oxfordshire a fair and equal place in which to live, work and visit.

We aim to ensure that our staff are equipped with the knowledge and skills to meet the diverse needs of customers, that our services are accessible and to encourage supportive and cohesive communities through our service delivery."

20. The policy also includes a general statement of effectiveness:

Oxfordshire County Council considers that it performs well in meeting the requirements of the Equality Duty.

21.   In setting out how the Council will achieve its ambition, and in recognising that there despite performing well there are areas where improvement is needed, the policy is structured around four key equality objectives:

Objective 1 - Understanding the needs of individuals and communities

Objective 2 - Providing accessible, local and personalised services

Objective 3 - Supporting thriving and cohesive communities

Objective 4 - Promoting a culture of fairness in employment and service delivery

22.   The policy has been updated and amended to reflect the outcomes of the consultation and the feedback will continue to inform implementation of the policy. In particular, more detail has been added under each objective to provide more explanation of what each means and why it is considered to be important. This includes more examples of what the council is already doing, providing a stronger link to the supporting information about our current performance that has already been published on the council website to demonstrate our compliance with the public sector equality duty (see www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/cms/public-site/equality-and-cohesion)

23.   The four key equality objectives have also been amended slightly from the key issues published as part of the consultation document, to reflect feedback during the consultation period:

   (a)   Objective 1 previously referred to 'understanding the needs of customers', a term that people did not feel accurately reflected the fact that many service users do not choose to access our services, or that many people do not access council services at all.
   (b)   Objective 4 was previously 'promoting a culture of fairness', and in response to feedback has been amended to be more specific about what we are aiming to achieve.

24.   These key equality objectives link closely to the overall strategic objectives of the council as set out in the Council Plan 2012-1017. A number of actions are set out under each objective, based on the need to build on current practice and address areas for improvement. These actions are closely linked to existing strategies, plans and objectives, and will be reported on as part of the Council's quarterly performance monitoring arrangements (rather than establishing another performance management process).

Financial and Staff Implications

25.   There are no financial implications arising directly from this report. However there may be financial implications arising from the delivery of some of the actions against the objectives in the Equality Policy 2012-2017. These will be met from within existing budgets.

26. The implementation of the Equality Policy 2012-2017 will require all staff to be aware of their responsibilities under the Equality Act 2010, and of the Council's approach to 'mainstreaming' its equality work. Appropriate training and briefing opportunities will be delivered throughout the coming year, including through the corporate learning and development programme.

Equality Implications

27. By definition the Equality Policy 2012-2017 is intended to have a positive impact on all groups that share protected characteristics as defined in the Equality Act 2010. However, in keeping with Council guidance these implications have been considered in more detail in the Service and Community Impact Assessment attached at Annex 4.

   RECOMMENDATION

28. **The Cabinet is RECOMMENDED to approve the Council's judgement on effectiveness and key equality objectives as set out in the Equality Policy 2012/2017 and to RECOMMEND Council to receive the report.**

Peter Clark
Head of Law and Governance

Background papers: None
Contact Officer: Ben Threadgold, Senior Policy and Performance Officer, 01865 32 8219

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Oxfordshire County Council Equality Policy 2012-2017

Fair Access to Services; Equal Life Chances

How the County Council ensures fairness and real choice in the delivery of services

What equality means to us

Equality, opportunity, local choice.

These values inform how Oxfordshire County Council delivers services to the people of Oxfordshire. Both the Cabinet and management team are united in their commitment to ensure that everyone in Oxfordshire has the opportunity to share in a thriving Oxfordshire.

The new equality policy brings together many years of work in developing fairer and more accessible services. It represents the county council's continuing commitment to customer service and local choice. No single approach to delivering services can be expected to meet everyone's needs. Effective services should be flexible, responsive and designed around the diversity of interests that their customers have.

The purpose of the policy is also to establish a change of approach, based on the principles of transparency about how our services are performing, clarity about what action we are taking and the involvement of users, community groups or staff in the solution. We are also committed to making equalities integral to everything we do, ensuring it seen as part of everyone's business and a way of helping us deliver excellent outcomes for individuals and communities. The document has been developed in line with the objectives of our Corporate Plan and sits alongside published information on the county council's performance.

The county council promotes equality though the broad range of public services that it delivers. Oxfordshire County Council is responsible for providing many key local services and employs over 20,000 people to deliver them. Each year the council manages over £900 million of public money in the provision of these services on behalf of Oxfordshire's 650,000 people. This includes schools, social services, the fire service, roads, libraries and the museums service, trading standards, land use, transport planning and waste management. Ensuring that such diverse services are responsive to the needs of individuals and communities is a key challenge that this policy aims to tackle.

Councillor Kieron Mallon
Cabinet Member for Police & Policy Coordination

Joanna Simons CBE
Chief Executive

Contents

1.0   Introduction

1.1.   The purpose of this policy is to set out how the Council is approaching its responsibilities for ensuring that all residents in Oxfordshire have fair access to services and equal life chances. It also demonstrates how the Council is meeting the requirements placed on public bodies under the Equality Act 2010.

1.2   Our approach to equalities is based around addressing four key objectives:

- Understanding the needs of individuals and communities
- Providing accessible, local and personalised services
- Supporting thriving and cohesive communities
- Promoting a culture of fairness in employment and service delivery

1.3   This policy is supported by a document that sets out how we are meeting each of these key issues in terms of current performance, focusing particularly on how we meet the needs of people who share protected equality characteristics. The supporting evidence does not include everything the Council is doing, but highlights the key areas of success and, where necessary, where action is being taken to improve outcomes. The supporting information is available at: www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/cms/public-site/equality-and-cohesion.

1.4   The following information has been used to inform this policy:

- The number of people with different protected characteristics who access and use services in different ways.
- Customer satisfaction levels and informal feedback from service users with different protected characteristics, and results of consultations.
- Complaints about discrimination and complaints from people with different protected characteristics.
- Details of policies and programmes that have been put in place to ensure high equality standards or address equality concerns in service delivery.

1.5   Monitoring and reporting on these areas enables us to analyse the information to see if there are differences between protected characteristics and investigate the processes which have resulted in these differences, taking action as necessary to try and remove barriers and promote equality for all groups.

The Equality Act 2010

1.6   As a public body, Oxfordshire County Council recognises the requirement to give due regard to the three main aims of the Equality Duty, and the need to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Act.
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
- Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic, and those who do not.

1.7 The Public Sector Equality Duty replaces the previous public sector equality duties for disability, ethnicity and gender and covers the following protected characteristics:

- Age
- Disability
- Gender reassignment
- Marriage and civil partnership (but only in respect of eliminating unlawful discrimination)
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Race – this includes ethnic or national origins, colour or nationality
- Religion or belief – this includes lack of belief
- Sex
- Sexual orientation

1.8 The Public Sector Equality Duty requires public bodies to consider how the decisions that they make, and the services they deliver, affect people who share different protected characteristics and publish information to demonstrate that they have done this. In addition the Council is also required to set specific, measurable equality objectives and publish these, along with an equality policy.

1.9 The Council is also required to publish information to demonstrate it has considered how its activities as an employer affect people who share different protected characteristics. This is available at:
http://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/cms/content/fairness-and-equality-work

Human Rights Act

1.10 The Human Rights Act requires public bodies to have regard to the human rights set out in the European Convention, and to ensure that the human rights of all members of the community are respected in all that they do. Human rights are based on core principles like dignity, fairness, equality, respect and autonomy.

1.11 The Human Rights Act is not just about preventing public authorities from taking certain actions. It also requires them to take proactive steps to prevent breaches of human rights from happening in the first place, no matter who or what is causing the harm. The Act seeks to respect all individuals' rights, including the right to effectively take part in decisions made by public authorities and to get fair and equal services from public authorities.

1.12   All children and young people up to the age of 18 years have rights under the
        United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC). Some groups
        of children and young people – for example those living away from home, and
        young disabled people – have additional rights to make sure they are treated
        fairly and their needs are met.

1.13   The purpose of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities
        (UNCRPD) is to promote, protect and ensure the full and equal enjoyment of
        all human rights by disabled people

1.14   Local authorities must consider human rights when making decisions and
        determining policies. This can be of particular value in underpinning a range of
        policy and practice developments, and in safeguarding vital services,
        particularly for the most vulnerable groups. It can also help to determine
        proportionate action, especially where the interests of different parties conflict.

2.0 Equality of Opportunity – Our Ambition

2.1 Oxfordshire County Council is committed to making Oxfordshire a fair and equal place in which to live, work and visit.

2.2 We aim to ensure that our staff are equipped with the knowledge and skills to meet the diverse needs of customers, that our services are accessible and to encourage supportive and cohesive communities through our service delivery.

General Statement of Effectiveness

2.3 **In general, Oxfordshire County Council considers that it performs well in meeting the requirements of the Equality Duty.** This is based on the range of evidence contained in this document and the supporting information, which demonstrates the wide range of actions being taken across service areas to avoid discrimination and harassment, advance equality of opportunity or foster good relations.

2.4 The Council has a raised awareness of the impact of our policies, practices and decisions on people with different protected characteristics. This enables us to make informed decisions about policies and practices which are based on evidence about the impact of our activities on equality, and have due regard to the aims of the general equality duty by ensuring that staff have appropriate information for decision-making.

2.5 We regularly assess whether we are discriminating unlawfully when carrying out any of our functions, and benchmark our performance and processes against those of similar organisations nationally and locally. We also consider taking steps to meet the needs of staff and service users who share relevant protected characteristics where appropriate, based on evidence and assessment of performance.

2.6 However, as demonstrated elsewhere in this document there are a number of specific areas where we need to take action to improve our performance, and to improve outcomes for people who share protected characteristics. These areas form the basis of the key equality objectives for the Council, and the priorities for action we have identified.

What we are seeking to achieve

2.7 In achieving our ambition, we have identified four key equality issues for the Council, and these will guide our approach:

- Objective 1- Understanding the needs of individuals and communities

- Objective 2 -Providing accessible, local and personalised services

- Objective 3 - Supporting thriving and cohesive communities

- Objective 4 - Promoting a culture of fairness in employment and service delivery

2.8 These key equality objectives align closely with the Council's overall strategic objectives, as set out in the Council's Corporate Plan. This helps to ensure that our work on equality and diversity is embedded within service planning delivery rather than being seen as separate, and supports our commitment to making equalities integral to everything we do.

3.0 For each key objective we have identified a number of actions will be taking to build on current achievements and address areas where improvement is needed in our performance. Progress in delivering these actions will be monitored as part of the Council's overall performance management framework to further reinforce the 'mainstreaming' of our approach to equality and diversity.

2.0 Objective 1 - Understanding the needs of individuals and communities

2.1 This objective is focused on how we understand the needs of the people and communities of Oxfordshire, including the wide range of consultation and engagement arrangements we already have in place. The objectives that follow focus on how we use this better understanding of need to plan services in response to the needs we have identified.

2.2 Over the next twenty years Oxfordshire is expected to continue to become more ethnically diverse, and to have a higher proportion of older people and people with disabilities. Everyone will rightly expect to be treated fairly, and will demand services that are appropriate for their needs.

2.3 The Council already collects a significant amount of data about the accessibility of our services and how our customers are using them. We also engage with service users and interested groups to discuss their needs and how well we meet them, and will continue to do so. This helps us to understand the areas where we are meeting people's needs effectively so we can build on these, and identify where we need to do more to reduce inequality and promote better outcomes.

2.4 We recognise that we can do more to use the data that we hold already more effectively to inform service planning and decision-making. We have also identified a number of areas where we hold very little data, or where the data we hold is out of date, and will seek to address this. This will be addressed in part through updating key evidence bases such as the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment, and through analysis of the outcomes of the Census 2011 when published later this year.

2.5 We will also continue to monitor and analyse our performance in key service areas to understand how well we are addressing areas for improvement we have identified, such as narrowing the gap in educational attainment or in levels of satisfaction with adult social care between different groups.

Priorities for Action - we will:

1a) Investigate why levels of satisfaction with services that are generally high are variable between different groups, for example by running focus groups with adult social care service users.

1b) Ensure that Oxfordshire Voice Citizens' Panel, our resident's panel, is broadly representative of the makeup of the county by increasing the

number of people who share some of the protected characteristics to ensure it is balanced to reflect age, gender, ethnicity and disability.

1c) Implement our new Strategy for Education to improve educational outcomes for all young people. In particular, we will take action to close unacceptable gaps in attainment levels between children from different backgrounds and who share protected characteristics (for example looked after children, some black and minority ethnic groups, and some children with special educational needs).

1d) Provide information and support to vulnerable adults so that more people who use services report that they feel safer each year.

1e) Ask older people and people with a disability who we work with if we can pass on their details to other services and organisations, including the Fire and Rescue Service who will be able to undertake Fire Risk Assessments in their homes.

3.0 Objective 2 – Providing accessible, local and personalised services

3.1 This objective, and those that follow, is focused on how the Council responds to the needs of the people and communities of Oxfordshire.

3.2 Customer choice is at the heart of the county council's approach. We want county council services to be flexible, local and developed around the diversity of individual needs. For example, we have created a new Early Intervention Service, specifically designed to reflect our understanding of the needs of our children and young people and based around seven locality 'hubs' in those areas of the county where there is most need.

3.3 We are developing a joint approach to commissioning adult, community and children's services. This will ensure our approach focuses on local circumstances and is able to meet the needs of vulnerable people irrespective of whether they share protected characteristics or not, including those living in rural areas where isolation and access to services can be particular issues.

3.4 The county council is also radically transforming the way it delivers adult social care services, increasing the number of people with personalised budgets that provide choice about how to spend money on their care. We also continue to implement strategies to improve educational attainment, to protect and safeguard the most vulnerable groups in the county, and support carers of all ages.

3.5 We aim to ensure our physical assets (eg roads, buses, public buildings and reception areas) maintain high standards of accessibility for all residents, and leading on the roll out of superfast broadband in Oxfordshire to improve access to online services (especially in rural areas).

3.6 Through the Oxfordshire Online project we have an emphasis on making more services available online, and making online services more accessible to all. However we also recognise that this is not suitable for everyone, and will continue to make our publications available in alternative formats and languages where requested, and to develop our customer services in response to feedback.

Priorities for Action - we will:

2a) Maintain our focus on preventing the need for more specialist services through early identification of problems and early intervention in adult and children's services.

2b) Analyse the number of children from minority ethnic backgrounds on child protection plans. The findings will be used to develop plans to address any over representation identified, and to learn from where the number of

young people from certain groups on child protection plans is lower than might be expected.

2c) Map the dispersal of young carers around the County to see if there are any geographical clusters or patterns, with a view to understanding why this occurs and what action is needed to address issues that cause it.

2d) Change the way day services for older people are provided, maintaining services in major towns, but focusing on community initiatives and local decision-making about how best to support older people in their community.

2e) Focus on giving people choice in the way they lead their lives and how they secure the services they need to support them. We will increase each year the proportion of people who receive a direct payment which allows them to secure the services they need to support them.

2f) Support older people, and people with a disability to live in their own home for longer by:

- o Providing more support to help older people increase their ability to cope so that more of them can return home and stay there after hospital discharge

- o Increasing the number of hours of long term support made available to clients

- o Devolving budgets to local area managers so that they are specifically able to address the needs of their locality

- o increasing the availability of extra care housing and assistive technology

- o continuing to provide information and support to carers.

2g) Work with business network providers to develop and implement a strategy for the roll out of super-fast broadband across the county, to improve access to online services for all.

2h) Enable all Adult Learning tutors to integrate equality and diversity into their teaching – content and classroom management – in order to ensure inclusivity for all learners

2i) Continue to develop improved accessibility routes on the public rights of way network.

2j) Provide training to Highways & Transport staff involved in policy and design to ensure they understand the constraints faced by customers with a disability using our services, and have regard to these constraints in service design and delivery.

4.0 Objective 3 - Supporting thriving and cohesive communities

4.1 The county council has been working to get closer to the communities we serve, understand the challenges they face and make sure our services are working together as effectively as possible. Our Closer to Communities Strategy recognises the importance of the council showing community leadership, and ensures officers and councillors work together with partners and communities at a local level to share information and meet needs.

4.2 The county council is also committed to empowering communities to do things for themselves, including identifying and/or responding when public sector may not be able to continue to provide a service. We believe that supporting communities to take on this challenge, as we have done with youth provision and other community activities through the Big Society Fund, will lead to better quality services that local residents feel that are truly theirs and reflect the needs of all those in their community.

4.3 There is a significant military presence in Oxfordshire, which brings a number of specific challenges. Oxfordshire was the first local authority to pledge support to the Community Covenant in June 2011, and our Military Civilian Partnership has been working on a number of key themes to address areas such as school admissions and attainment for children from service families, health care and employment and skills for service leavers

4.4 As part of the countywide work to improve community safety, the county council is committed to working with its partners and suppliers to protect individuals, in the community and on our premises, where they have been targeted because of their characteristics. We have worked with schools, advice centres and care homes to prevent bullying, harassment or abuse. We have also launched a hate-crime reporting service to enable people to report incidents to a wide range of different local agencies other than the police and receive support from organisations with the appropriate expertise.

Priorities for Action - we will:

3a) Continue to work in partnership to improve the quality of life in the most deprived areas of the county. This will include promoting better engagement in education, employment and training; supporting the vulnerable and those with multiple and enduring problems; promoting healthy lifestyles and reducing health inequalities; reducing and mitigating the effects of child poverty.

3b) Continue to provide a Big Society Fund that will support local communities and organisations who wish to identify local priorities and do things for themselves about issues that matter to them. We will also review expressions of interest,

applications and funding patterns from 2011/12 and work with community groups to raise awareness and encourage access to the Fund.

3c) Continue to work closely with our military partners to maximise the value obtained from the pupil premium by focusing on specific needs of children from armed forces families, and ensure schools have appropriate information to support these children.

3d) Continue to work closely with military partners to ensure we maximise the support we offer to carers of vulnerable people. We will ensure that we provide more information and support to carers around military bases and ensure that we support developments such as good neighbours' schemes by military bases.

3e) Raise awareness of the MANTRA (Multi-Agency Network for Tackling Racially Aggravated Harassment) service. We will also increase the number of agencies and venues people can use to report incidents of and concerns about hate crime, including in rural areas.

5.0 Objective 4 - Promoting a culture of fairness in employment and service delivery

5.1 The County Council is committed to ensuring equality of access, fairness and consideration to all of our staff and potential future staff, and in the delivery of services to the people and communities of Oxfordshire.

5.2 The council's Dignity at Work policy states all employees will have due regard to the need to eliminate unlawful discrimination, to promote equality of opportunity and to promote good relations between different groups., There are a range of learning and development opportunities to ensure staff are aware of this commitment and their responsibilities, including the 'Respect for People' electronic learning package that must be completed as part of induction for new employees.

5.3 We review our policies and practices to ensure they are appropriate and are implemented effectively to enable individuals to work to the best of their abilities and protect them from discrimination and harassment. The council is working with union partners to develop staff forums to listen to how different groups of staff think practices can be improved. We also recognise there may be barriers to applying for jobs at the council that are beyond the control of the applicant, and have made changes to our recruitment policies to help ensure we get the best possible staff for any given role regardless of their circumstances.

5.4 As well as the services we provide directly, our commitment to equality of opportunity extends to services delivered on our behalf through contracts and commissioning, and through services linked closely to the council such as schools and the Fire and Rescue Service. It also includes working with our partners to ensure the same high standards apply across those that we commission services from, whether they are public, private or voluntary sector organisations.

Priorities for Action - we will:

4a) Ensure all managers and Councillors are aware of their responsibilities under the Equality Act 2010, and encourage all employees to access learning and development opportunities to increase their awareness and understanding of equality and diversity issues.

4b) Ensure equality and diversity is integrated into the culture of the Customer Service Centre by embedding it within the behaviour and attitudes of staff, as well as the routine policies, procedures and practices of the service.

4c) Undertake a full review of existing equality and diversity policies to ensure they remain in line with best practice and meet the requirements of the Equality Act 2010.

4d) Continue to encourage people from diverse backgrounds to apply for roles at the council, and do more to increase awareness of the support available to staff and guidance for managers to ensure that reasonable adjustments are made where appropriate.

4e) Investigate the reasons for the lower levels of young workers employed by the council, and continue to expand the number of apprenticeship opportunities to create entry level posts.

4f) Identify opportunities to work with others to deliver services that improve outcomes for groups with protected characteristics more effectively and develop innovative approaches to common issues, whether through formal partnership arrangements or more informal collaborative arrangements.

4g) Ensure that where services are being restructured there is a well-managed approach to diversity, including completion of Service and Community Impact Assessments to ensure that under-represented groups are not disproportionately affected in the resulting staff reductions. Statistics for redundancy will also need to be closely monitored.

6.0 Service and Community Impact Assessments

6.1 The Equality Act 2010 requires all public authorities to assess the impact of their policies on communities. In this context, 'policies' is a general term that could include strategies, projects or contracts. The assessment has five parts: gather information, engagement, analysis, objective setting and review.

6.2 In Oxfordshire County Council, this process is termed Service and Community Impact Assessments (SCIA). A SCIA is intended to ensure policies meet the diverse needs of our customers. We assess the impact of decisions on any relevant community, but with particular emphasis on groups that share protected characteristics.

6.3 All policies undergo an initial assessment that is proportionate to the significance of the change and the potential impact. Assessments are available to Councillors when making a decision on whether to agree a new policy or not. Any significant decisions have a full assessment, demonstrating the data and research that has been used, feedback from consultations with affected groups and an action plan to mitigate any impacts. Partners, staff or stakeholders are involved to check the assumptions match the experience on-the-ground.

6.4 Each year, an initial assessment is produced on the potential impact of the cross-cutting issues in the overall Council budget. This year, it also covers the Medium Term Corporate Plan and the capital programme, to ensure there is a consistent and considered assessment of the potential impacts across the whole of the Council's service and resource planning process.

6.5 Once a decision is made the assessments are updated and then reviewed on a regular basis over the implementation of the project or policy or contract to ensure that the initial assessments were accurate, and that the impact of any changes in approach and learning from implementation are included.

6.6 Completed Service and Community Impact Assessments are published on the public website at: www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/cms/public-site/equality-and-cohesion

7.0 Monitoring and Governance

7.1 To help ensure that our work on equalities and diversity is embedded within service planning delivery, responsibility will rest with Directorate Leadership Teams. Issues will then be escalated and reported as appropriate to the County Council Management Team and Cabinet, as part of the Council's quarterly performance monitoring and risk management arrangements. This document and the supporting information will be updated annually to reflect performance, and progress in implementing the actions we have identified will be reported to the relevant Scrutiny Committee, Cabinet and the Council.

7.2 We will also continue to engage with a wide range of stakeholders from within and outside the Council to help us assess how successfully we are meeting the needs of the people and communities of Oxfordshire. We will continue to publish information about our performance, the outcomes of Service and Community Impact Assessments, new policies and proposals for changes in service delivery on our website. We will continue to seek feedback and comment on our plans and our performance, and consult both formally and informally with key stakeholders to inform our service planning and inform our decision-making.

8.0 More information

More information about our work can be found in the following documents and links:

- The Council Plan (www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/corporateplan)

- Directorate business strategies (www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/businessstrategies)

- The Council website (http://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/cms/content/equality-and-cohesion)

- Children and Young People's Plan (http://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/cms/content/children-and-young-peoples-plan-2010-2013)

- Walk the Talk? (http://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/cms/content/fire-service-recruitment-information-women-and-ethnic-minorities)

- Equality Duty in Employment Report, 2011 (http://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/cms/content/fairness-and-equality-work)

Alternative formats of this publication can be made available. These include other languages, large print, Braille, Easy Read, audiocassette, computer disc or email. Please telephone 01865 32 8219.

اشكال بديلة لهذا المنشور موجودة حسب الطلب. هذه تشمل لغات مختلفة و الطبعة البارزة وطريقة بريل و اشرطة كاست و اقراص الحاسوب او البريد الالكتروني.

Arabic

আপনি যদি অনুরোধ করেন তাহলে এই পুস্তিকাটি বিকল্প ছাঁদে, যেমন, অন্য কোনও ভাষায়, বড় হরফে, ব্রেইলে, অডিও-ক্যাসেটে, কম্পিউটারের ডিস্কে বা ইমেলের মারফত পেতে পারেন।

Bengali

"本刊物備有其他的格式可供索取。這些包括有其他語言版，大字版，盲人用版，錄音帶版，電腦磁碟版或電子郵件版。"

Chinese

प्रार्थना करने पर यह प्रकाशन दूसरे रूपों में प्राप्त किया जा सकता है। जिस में सम्मिलित है, दूसरी भाषाओं में, बड़े छापे में, ब्रेअल, सुनने की टेप पर, कम्प्यूटर की डिस्क पर या ई-मेल द्वारा।

Hindi

"ਇਹ ਪੁਸਤਕ ਬੇਨਤੀ ਕਰਨ ਤੇ ਹੋਰ ਰੂਪਾਂ ਵਿਚ ਵੀ ਉਪਲਬਧ ਹੈ। ਜਿਵੇਂ ਕਿ ਹੋਰ ਭਾਸ਼ਾਵਾਂ ਵਿਚ, ਵੱਡੇ ਛਾਪੇ ਤੇ, ਬ੍ਰੇਲ ਵਿਚ, ਸੁਣਨ ਵਾਲੀ ਟੇਪ ਤੇ, ਕੰਪਿਊਟਰ ਡਿਸਕ ਜਾਂ ਈ ਮੇਲ ਤੇ।"

Punjabi

"اس اشاعت کو متبادل اشکال میں درخواست کرنے پر حاصل کیا جا سکتا ہے۔ اس میں دوسری زبانیں، بڑا پرنٹ، بریل (جسے اندھے چھو کر پڑھ سکیں)، آڈیو کیسٹ، کمپیوٹر ڈسک یا ای میل شامل ہیں۔"

Urdu

Na życzenie publikacja jest dostępna w innych formatach. Do nich należą wersje w innych językach, drukowane dużą czcionką, alfabetem Braille'a, w wersji audio, na dysku komputerowym, lub jako email.

Polish

Annex 2: Summary of Consultation with Stakeholders

1.   This Annex sets out the key messages from consultation about the Draft Equality Policy 2012-17, which took place between 19 January and 2 March 2012 (a period of 6 weeks).

     Written consultation

2.   Details of the written consultation including the draft policy document, supporting information and links to an online survey were placed on the council's intranet site and public website and promoted using home page features and headlines.

3.   A wide range of stakeholders were informed about the consultation and invited to comment, including:

     - county council staff

     - county councillors

     - schools and universities

     - district, town and parish councils

     - public sector organisations such as Thames Valley Police, Primary Care Trust

     - military

     - voluntary, community and faith sector organisations and charities, including those representing people who share protected characteristics as set out in the Equality Act 2010.

4.   In total, we received 10 responses to the online survey and two email responses. A copy of the consultation documents and a marked-up questionnaire are available on the council's consultation calendar at www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/consultation. A copy of the marked-up questionnaire giving the detailed comments will be placed in the councillors resource room.

     Stakeholder workshop

5.   A stakeholder workshop took place on the morning of 17 February 2012, offering an opportunity to discuss the draft policy and comment in more detail as part of the consultation. A wide range of public, voluntary, community and faith sector organisations and charities were invited, along with some existing service users and in total 21 people attending the event.

6.   The workshop was chaired by Peter Clark, Head of Law & Governance and included:

     - A presentation to provide a high level overview of the Equality Act and the council's approach to equalities

     - An open discussion on the aim and ambition presented in the Draft Equality Policy 2012-17 and on the four key issues it identified

- Round-table discussions focussing in detail on the priorities for action allocated to each of the four key issues. Each table was allocated two issues to explore in detail

- A feedback session to share key messages from the round table discussions

7. A copy of the workshop agenda, the presentation given and the flip chart notes are available on the council's consultation calendar at www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/consultation. A copy of the detailed notes will be placed in the councillor's resource room.

Outcomes – High Level Feedback

8. Overall, the outcomes of the consultation indicate there was broad support for the council's overall ambition for and approach to equalities. There we some objections expressed and the feedback also provided helpful suggestions for how the key issues might be delivered, including how the council might engage with and support communities.

Overall Themes

- **Use of language in the policy document** such as use of specific terms e.g. customers and the need for clearer definitions e.g. how does the council define the term 'fairness'?

- **The need for more greater clarification** including using examples, to help illustrate what is meant under each key issue

- **More consideration of governance and accountability** especially external to the council including measurement, oversight, audit and challenge

- **Further explanation on the council's approach to mainstreaming equalities**, including how the council's approach to policy implementation and how outreach, engagement, advocacy and service delivery will be balanced

- **Manage expectations** of what can and cannot be achieved in current economic climate and associated constraints

9. The feedback also provided helpful, practical suggestions for how the key issues might be delivered including:
  - learning from others
  - working in partnership
  - making use of existing data tools
  - signposting
  - investing in training
  - promoting funds options e.g. Big Society Fund
  - raising awareness of existing services
  - how the council might engage with and support communities and use a development approaches

Annex 4: Service and Community Impact Assessment

Directorate Name: Chief Executive's Office

Equality Policy 2012-2017

Service and Community Impact Assessment

Lead Officer: Peter Clark

Purpose of the assessment

This is an initial assessment of the potential impact of the new Equality Policy 2012-2017, with particular reference to groups of people who share protected characteristics. This assessment will be kept under review as the policy and actions it contains are implemented, and updated as necessary to ensure emerging risks are identified and appropriate mitigating action taken. Separate assessments will be undertaken on specific actions as appropriate, for example where they in themselves constitute a significant change in policy in their own right.

Summary

The Equality Policy 2012-2017 sets out how the Council is approaching its responsibilities for ensuring that all residents in Oxfordshire have fair access to services and equal life chances. It also demonstrates how the Council is meeting the requirements placed on public bodies under the Equality Act 2010, including setting equality objectives for the next four years.

A draft of the policy has been out for public consultation since January, and the final policy has been amended to reflect feedback from internal and external stakeholders. To fulfil our legislative requirements, the final policy will be published by 6th April 2012, and progress in implementing it will be monitored and reported as part of the council's overall performance management arrangements.

The policy establishes the intention to build on current practice and address areas that are identified as requiring improvement, with appropriate actions identified and plans to monitor their implementation.

Although the policy is intended to have a positive impact on outcomes for all individuals and groups who share protected characteristics, potential negative impacts are identified on customers, staff and providers. However these are mitigated by a range of actions, including the completion of service and community

impact assessments for individual actions and policies, training and briefing for staff, responsibility for equalities resting with Deputy Directors and Directorate Leadership teams, and standard contract procurement and monitoring practices.

Introduction

Section 149 of the Equalities Act 2010 ("the 2010 Act") imposes a duty on the Council to give due regard to three needs in exercising its functions. This proposal is such a function. The three needs are:

- the need to eliminate any conduct which is prohibited by or under the 2010 Act;
- the need to advance equality of opportunity between persons who
- share any of the protected characteristics listed in section 149(7); and the need to foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not.

Complying with section 149 may involve treating some people more favourably than others, but only to the extent that that does not amount to conduct which is otherwise unlawful under the new Act.

The need to advance equality of opportunity involves having due regard to the need to:
- remove or minimise disadvantages which are connected to a relevant protected characteristic and which are suffered by persons who share that characteristic,
- take steps to meet the needs of persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and which are different from the needs other people, and encourage those who share a relevant characteristic to take part in public life or in any other activity in which participation by such people is disproportionately low.
- Steps to meet the needs of disabled people which are different from the needs of people who are not disabled include steps to take account of a person's disabilities.

The need to foster good relations between different groups involves having due regard to the need to tackle prejudice and promote understanding.

These protected characteristics are:
- Age (people of different age groups)
- Disability (e.g. physical or sensory impairments, long-term illnesses and conditions, hidden impairments such as a heart condition, frailty, learning disabilities or mental health problems)
- Gender Reassignment
- Marriage/civil partnerships (but only in respect of eliminating unlawful discrimination)
- Pregnancy & Maternity
- Race (including ethnic or national origins, colour or nationality)

- Religion or belief (including lack of belief)
- Sex
- Sexual orientation

In addition to the characteristics above, the Council has also considered the effect of the proposals on particular communities (e.g. urban, rural, deprived).

Consultation with Stakeholders

Public consultation on a draft of the Equality Policy 2012-2017 took place between 19 January and 2 March 2012 (a period of 6 weeks).

Details of the written consultation including the draft policy document, supporting information and links to an online survey were placed on the council's intranet site and public website and promoted using home page features and headlines.

Key stakeholders were also contacted directly and invited to comment, including all staff and Councillors; district, town and parish councils; other public sector organisations including Thames Valley Police, the Primary Care Trust, schools, universities and the military; voluntary, community and faith sector organisations and charities, including those representing people who share protected characteristics as set out in the Equality Act 2010.

A stakeholder workshop took place on 17 February 2012, offering an opportunity to discuss the draft policy and comment in more detail as part of the consultation. A wide range of public, voluntary, community and faith sector organisations and charities were invited, along with some existing service users.

In total 21 people attended the stakeholder workshop and 10 responses were received to the online consultation, with a further 2 responses sent by email.

Overall, the outcomes of the consultation indicate there was broad support for the council's overall ambition for and approach to equalities. There we some objections expressed about the use of language; the need for clarification and examples of current performance; more consideration of governance and accountability; further explanation of the council's approach to mainstreaming; and the need to manage expectations. The feedback also provided helpful suggestions for how the key issues might be delivered, including how the council might engage with and support communities.

The policy has been updated and amended to reflect the outcomes of the consultation. In particular, more detail has been added under each objective to provide more explanation of what each means and why it is considered to be important. This includes more examples of what the council is already doing, providing a stronger link to the supporting information about our current performance that has already been published on the council website to demonstrate our compliance with the public sector equality duty (see www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/cms/public-site/equality-and-cohesion)

The four key equality objectives have also been amended slightly from the key issues published as part of the consultation document, to reflect feedback during the consultation period

Impact on customers

By definition, the Equality Policy 2012-2017 is intended to have a positive impact on outcomes for people who share protected characteristics, and in many cases for the wider communities of Oxfordshire as well. The policy and supporting information specifically identifies the need to fulfil the three key aims of the Equality Act 2010 and the public sector equality duties, and identifies issues related to age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation. It also identifies issues related to deprivation and rurality, and in all cases sets appropriate action where needed to improve outcomes for specific groups.

As such, there is unlikely to be any negative impact on particular groups as a direct result of the policy itself. However the implementation of specific actions will need to be closely monitored to ensure that, in positively impacting circumstances for one or more groups, there are not unintended negative impacts on others.

Risk	Mitigation
The key equality objectives and priorities for action are not implemented, or do not have the desired positive impact	Progress in implementing the objectives and actions will be monitored reviewed as part of the council's overall performance and risk management arrangements, and amended as appropriate / required Service users, individuals and communities who share protected characteristics, and representative organisations will be engaged in the development and implementation of actions as appropriate
Implementing actions to have a positive impact on one or more groups who share protected characteristics has an unintended negative consequence on others	Progress in implementing the objectives and actions will be monitored reviewed as part of the council's overall performance and risk management arrangements, and amended as appropriate / required All actions that represent a significant change in policy or are likely to impact on one or more groups of customers will undergo a Service and Community Impact Assessment, with appropriate mitigating actions identified and implemented

Impact on staff

The Equality Act 2010 requires all decision-makers to be aware of their responsibilities in relation to the aims of the Act, and all staff (and elected members) will need to be aware of the key equality objectives and actions identified with the Equality Policy 2012-2017. Staff will also be required to consider the potential impact of their own actions and decisions on people who share protected characteristics during the course of their 'everyday work', in keeping with the Council's approach to 'mainstreaming' equality and diversity work.

Risk	Mitigation
Staff are not aware of the new policy, or their responsibilities under the Equality Act 2010	A communications plan has been developed to help implement the new strategy, utilising a range of methods to raise awareness including intranet, CCMT core brief cascade and targeted briefing and training sessions
Mainstreaming equalities makes it 'no-one's business' rather than 'everyone's business'	Responsibility for the implementation of the Equalities Policy and ensuring high standards of equality and diversity practice rests with Deputy Directors and Directorate Leadership Teams. Key equality objectives are closely aligned to corporate objectives, and priorities for action embedded within existing plans and strategies (including directorate business strategies. Issues will be identified and escalated as appropriate as part of the council's overall performance and risk management process.
Staff do not feel confident considering or dealing with equality and diversity issues	A range of training and briefing opportunities will be delivered, including targeted sessions for specific services or areas / topics of concern

Impact on providers

Public bodies are responsible for ensuring that any third parties which exercise functions on their behalf are capable of complying with the Equality Duty, are required to comply with it, and that they do so in practice. It is a duty that cannot be delegated. It is therefore important that all individuals and organisations providing services on behalf of the council are aware of their responsibilities under the Equality Act, equality duty, and the new Equality Policy.

Risk	Mitigation
Any provider will be expected to uphold the same high standards of equality and diversity as the Council in furthering the aims of the Equality Act 2010 and specific public sector equality duty	There is a requirement that all organisations in receipt of council funding will adopt appropriate equalities policies, and ensure all staff are aware of their responsibilities in achieving the aims of the public sector equality duty. This requirement is made clear within procurement guidance and toolkits that are available to all staff, and is written into funding agreements and contracts awarded including monitoring arrangements. In the event of non-compliance appropriate action can be taken.

Impact on other council services

The Equality Policy 2012-2017 will apply to all council services, and in many cases will require changes in practice as a result of implanting actions identified within the policy and/or the review of other policies in line with the Equality Act 2010 and public sector equality duty.

However no risks specific to other council services have been identified, beyond those already considered above.

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