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Notice of a Meeting

Safer & Stronger Communities Scrutiny Committee
Monday, 13 February 2012 at 10.00 am
County Hall, Oxford, OX1 1ND

Membership

Chairman - Councillor Lawrie Stratford
Deputy Chairman - Councillor Stewart Lilly

Councillors:	John Goddard	Susanna Pressel	Alan Thompson
	Alyas Ahmed	John Sanders	Carol Viney
	Anthony Gearing	Bill Service	

Notes:

Date of next meeting: 30 April 2012

What does this Committee review or scrutinise?

- Community safety; anti-social behaviour; crime and the fear of crime; fire and rescue; consumer protection; emergency planning; police issues; coroner's service; gypsies and travellers; drugs and alcohol awareness; road safety (police, trading standards, fire and rescue); adult learning (oversight of the adult learning service in provider mode); libraries; museums and heritage; the arts; archives; leisure and recreation; registration service; community cohesion; voluntary and community sector.
- The functions of the responsible authorities (local authorities, fire and rescue authorities, police authorities, the police, primary care trusts and the Probation Service) which comprise a Crime & Disorder Reduction Partnership/Community Safety Partnership.
- Those regulatory functions of the Planning & Regulation Committee not falling within the remit of the Growth & Infrastructure Scrutiny Committee.

How can I have my say?
We welcome the views of the community on any issues in relation to the responsibilities of this Committee. Members of the public may ask to speak on any item on the agenda or may suggest matters which they would like the Committee to look at. **Requests to speak must be submitted to the Committee Officer below no later than 9 am on the working day before the date of the meeting.**

For more information about this Committee please contact:

Chairman	-	Councillor Lawrie Stratford
		E.Mail: lawrie.stratford@oxfordshire.gov.uk
Committee Officer	-	*Kathrin Luddecke, Tel: (01865) 323965*
		kathrin.luddecke@oxfordshire.gov.uk

Peter G. Clark
County Solicitor

February 2012

About the County Council
The Oxfordshire County Council is made up of 74 councillors who are democratically elected every four years. The Council provides a range of services to Oxfordshire's 630,000 residents. These include:

schools	social & health care	libraries and museums
the fire service	roads	trading standards
land use	transport planning	waste management

Each year the Council manages £0.9 billion of public money in providing these services. Most decisions are taken by a Cabinet of 9 Councillors, which makes decisions about service priorities and spending. Some decisions will now be delegated to individual members of the Cabinet.

About Scrutiny

Scrutiny is about:
- Providing a challenge to the Cabinet
- Examining how well the Cabinet and the Authority are performing
- Influencing the Cabinet on decisions that affect local people
- Helping the Cabinet to develop Council policies
- Representing the community in Council decision making
- Promoting joined up working across the authority's work and with partners

Scrutiny is NOT about:
- Making day to day service decisions
- Investigating individual complaints.

What does this Committee do?
The Committee meets up to 6 times a year or more. It develops a work programme, which lists the issues it plans to investigate. These investigations can include whole committee investigations undertaken during the meeting, or reviews by a panel of members doing research and talking to lots of people outside of the meeting. Once an investigation is completed the Committee provides its advice to the Cabinet, the full Council or other scrutiny committees. Meetings are open to the public and all reports are available to the public unless exempt or confidential, when the items would be considered in closed session

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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, giving as much notice as possible before the meeting

A hearing loop is available at County Hall.

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recycled paper

AGENDA

1. **Apologies for Absence and Temporary Appointments**

2. **Declarations of Interest - see guidance note on the back page**

3. **Minutes** (Pages 1 - 16)

   To approve the minutes of the meetings held on 7 November (**SSC3a**), 12 December (**SSC3b**) and 15 December 2011 (**SSC3c**) and to note for information any matters arising from them.

4. **Speaking to or petitioning the Committee**

5. **Director's Update** (Pages 17 - 20)
   10.15

   The Deputy Chief Fire Officer & Acting County Librarian, on behalf of the Director for Social & Community Services, will give verbal updates on key issues affecting their directorate.

   As part of the update, a written report on the use of the Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act 2000 by Oxfordshire County Council is attached for consideration by the committee (**SSC5**).

   ## SCRUTINY MATTERS

6. **Draft Oxfordshire Museums Strategy** (Pages 21 - 32)
   10.35

   Carol Anderson, Museum Service Manager, will present the draft Oxfordshire Museums Strategy (**SSC6**).

   The committee is invited to comment before the Strategy is considered by Cabinet in March.

7. **Integrated risk management plan (IRMP) Oxfordshire Fire and Rescue Authority - Draft action plan 2012-13** (Pages 33 - 42)
   10.55

   Mat Carlile, Area Manager - Business & Improvement, will give an update on this plan (**SSC7**), following consultation. The draft plan had been discussed by the committee in November 2011.

   The committee is invited to make any final comments before Cabinet considers the Plan on 14 February.

8.   Draft Proposal to Create a Joint Trading Standards Service between Oxfordshire and Buckinghamshire County Councils (Pages 43 - 54)
11.10

In March 2012 Cabinet will consider a proposal to create a joint Trading Standards Service with Buckinghamshire County Council. This proposal results from a period of research into, and evaluation of, the benefits and risks of creating a joint service to fulfil the Council's statutory consumer protection obligations in the most efficient and effective manner.

The report (**SSC8**) will be presented by Sarah Langley, Interim Manager – Trading Standards and outlines the findings from the research that led to the proposals that are to be considered by Cabinet. The Committee is invited to consider the proposal and raise matters that they would wish to be considered or addressed

9.   Update on Safer Communities Partnership and Police & Crime Commissioner and Panel (Pages 55 - 58)
11.30

Carys Alty, Manager - Safer Communities Unit, will present an update to clarify the current position regarding preparing for the Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) and the setting up the Thames Valley-wide Police and Crime Panel (PCP) (**SSC9**) which will have implications for local Scrutiny Committees.

BUSINESS PLANNING

10. Forward Plan
11.50

11. Close of Meeting

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.

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SAFER & STRONGER COMMUNITIES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

MINUTES of the meeting held on Monday, 7 November 2011 commencing at 10.00 am and finishing at 1.00 pm

Present:

Voting Members: Councillor Lawrie Stratford – in the Chair

Councillor Stewart Lilly (Deputy Chairman)
Councillor John Goddard
Councillor Anthony Gearing
Councillor Susanna Pressel
Councillor John Sanders
Councillor Bill Service
Councillor Alan Thompson
Councillor Carol Viney
Councillor Peter Jones (In place of Councillor Alyas Ahmed)

Other Members in Attendance: Councillor Judith Heathcoat
Councillor David Robertson (for agenda item 6)

Officers:

Whole of meeting   Dave Etheridge

Part of meeting

Agenda Item	Officer Attending
5	Carys Alty, Simon Kearey
6	Mike Bardsley, Vicky Field
7	Richard Webb, Martin Woodley
8	Nigel Wilson
9	Mat Carlile

The Scrutiny Committee considered the matters, reports and recommendations contained or referred to in the agenda for the meeting and agreed as set out below. Copies of the agenda and reports are attached to the signed Minutes.

156/11 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND TEMPORARY APPOINTMENTS
(Agenda No. 1)

Councillor Alyas Ahmed had sent apologies, and Councillor Peter Jones substituted.

157/11 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST - SEE GUIDANCE NOTE ON THE BACK PAGE
(Agenda No. 2)

There were no declarations of interest.

158/11 MINUTES
(Agenda No. 3)

The minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 5 September 2011 were **approved and signed with one amendment**: the amendment of 'Draft Heritage Strategy' to 'Draft Museums Strategy' (item 151/11).

Matters arising:

- Item 144/11: updates on power outage actions and Cogges Museum appointments to be circulated to committee members
- Item 144/11: Councillor Heathcoat informed the committee that the tender providing the Gypsy & Traveller Service for Chelsea had not been successful
- Item 147/11 (p.5): Councillor Pressel asked for an update about the death certificate reforms; Councillor Heathcoat replied that a number of questions had been raised about the proposals and an appointment was unlikely in the near future – an update will be made when there is news
- Item 147/11 (p.5): Councillor Heathcoat noted that the family room for the Coroner's Service at County Hall was now furnished and in use
- Item 151/11: Councillor Pressel asked for an update about archives; the chairman requested this be raised under agenda item 10 Forward Plan

159/11 SPEAKING TO OR PETITIONING THE COMMITTEE
(Agenda No. 4)

There were no speakers or petitions.

160/11 DIRECTOR'S UPDATE
(Agenda No. 5)

The Director's update was presented by the Chief Fire Officer & Head of Strategy and Transformation, on behalf of the Director for Social & Community Services, giving verbal updates on key issues affecting their directorates.

Councillor Heathcoat reported that the Fire & Rescue Service had received the Spirit of Fire Award for Brigade of the Year 2011. She thanked the Chief Fire Officer, senior management and all staff for a great achievement. The chairman added his congratulations to everyone for a fantastic service on behalf of the committee, which he asked to be fed back to staff. The Chief Fire Officer noted the Award was a tribute to the team and to elected members who helped by attending open days and supporting fundraising.

The verbal update by the Chief Fire Officer was followed by questions from the Committee members, primarily around the decision by Buckinghamshire to pursue

talks with Cambridgeshire rather than Oxfordshire and Berkshire for a joint control centre and the arrangements for an elected Police and Crime Commissioner and Police Crime Panels with representation from local authorities across force areas.

AGREED that both matters will be brought back to the committee in due course, with Councillor Mallon to be invited as chairman of the Oxfordshire Safer Communities Partnership and member of the Thames Valley Police Authority.

The Head of Strategy and Transformation gave a brief update on behalf of the Director for Social & Community Services. Members of the committee were concerned primarily with the libraries consultation which will be the single item on the committee's next agenda. Councillor Heathcoat assured the committee that papers for that meeting including equality impact assessments would be circulated as soon as possible, at the latest on 2 December.

AGREED that Simon Kearey will circulate the Museum Strategy in due course and respond to a request by the chairman for information about the proportion of large print books.

161/11 UPDATE FROM HEAD OF ADULT LEARNING
(Agenda No. 6)

Mike Bardsley Acting Head of Adult Learning and Vicky Field, Operations Manager (HR) attended to present an annual update on Adult Learning, which had moved from Social & Community Services to Oxfordshire Customer Service within the Environment and Economy Directorate. Councillor Robertson attended as new portfolio holder for the service.

Committee members raised a number of questions, focusing on staff reductions (30% of staff in that cohort of administrators in local centres but 12.5 fte out of 115 fte for the whole service) and the need to address different skills shortages across the county, from basic numeracy and literacy skills to high tech engineering. Councillor Robertson explained that the Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) would be working with the Skills Board, on which all local authorities are now represented, to link business needs with skills training.

Councillor Pressel expressed a concern about the proposal to externalise the service as other authorities had failed in attempts to do so. Vicky Field noted that any such change would be subject to detailed work and would be made safely, with plans going back to CCMT for consideration.

AGREED that Mike Bardsley will circulate information about numbers of learners and success rates, covering in-house and external providers; the committee wished to see a clear report come to relevant scrutiny in future, acknowledging the complexity of arrangements for the service.

162/11 TRADING STANDARDS REPORT ON DOORSTEP CRIME
(Agenda No. 7)

Richard Webb, Acting Head of Trading Standards, presented the key findings of the Doorstep Crime Team Annual Report 2010-2011. Councillor Pressel congratulated Martin Woodley on his MBE. She was reassured by Richard Webb that the Police were contributing to the success of the service in a number of important ways. The committee discussed the concern about how victims could be encouraged to come forward and that information should be targeted also at neighbours and relatives of vulnerable people.

It was **AGREED** that it would be useful for members to have a brief article they could pass on to local newsletters for publication or mention at Neighbourhood Action Groups. Richard Webb will provide a draft for members, including the phone number for the service.

163/11 OXFORDSHIRE FIRE & RESCUE SERVICE RESPONSE STANDARDS PERFORMANCE 2010/11
(Agenda No. 8)

Nigel Wilson, Area Manager and Operations and Resilience Manager Oxfordshire Fire & Rescue Service, presented the Fire & Rescue – Response Standards Performance Report 2010/11. Replying to members' questions, he explained that this report did not include response rates by the service in neighbouring counties or by neighbouring services in Oxfordshire. He will circulate information about particular traffic hotspots that could affect response rates, such as Bicester Village at weekends.

164/11 FIRE & RESCUE'S INTEGRATED RISK MANAGEMENT PLAN FOR 2012-2013
(Agenda No. 9)

Mat Carlile, Area Manager and Business & Improvement Manager Oxfordshire Fire and Rescue Service, presented the Integrated Risk Management Plan (IRMP) Oxfordshire Fire And Rescue Authority - Action Plan 2012-13. Following consultation starting on 14 November, the plan will go back to Cabinet and scrutiny if required in February 2012.

The Chief Fire Officer reassured the committee that the service's forward planning was taking into account housing and employment developments across the county. He confirmed that comments made by scrutiny would be considered as part of the consultation, but welcomed further comments.

Councillor Pressel highlighted a focus on the most vulnerable and road safety as important; she queried issues around child pedestrian casualties, 'boy racers' and enforcement by the Police, as well as arson in particular. The Chief Fire Officer noted work and achievements in these areas to date. **AGREED** that he will send an electronic update concerning child pedestrian casualties and arson reduction; it was noted that the Road Safety Strategy which was discussed at the last scrutiny meeting was currently out for consultation.

Councillor Sanders expressed concerns regarding school road safety and questioned whether zig-zag markings that could be enforced should be compulsory. Councillor Heathcoat noted that everyone was aware of these issues, which required the co-operation of schools, and suggested ensuring local Police Community Support Officers (PCSOs) undertook spot checks. The chairman mentioned work the school where he served as governor had undertaken, with children in high visibility vests 'ticketing' parents who parked where they should not.

165/11 FORWARD PLAN
(Agenda No. 10)

A draft Work Plan for the committee was circulated. The chairman brought to the committee's attention that potential items for discussions included annual reports and statutory updates. He was looking to see if agendas could be themed by grouping related items together, inviting the relevant portfolio holder for a focused discussion.

AGREED that members should contact the committee officer with suggestions for future items. Items mentioned at the meeting included Adult Learning and issues around community cohesion and equalities. The chairman explained that he had asked for the remit of the committee to be clarified and whether some work streams such as Adult Learning might be covered more appropriately by a different committee.

166/11 CLOSE OF MEETING
(Agenda No. 11)

Close of meeting 1pm

Date of next meetings

December 12 – Single agenda item: Libraries consultation
December 15 – Budget proposals

.... in the Chair

Date of signing   ....

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SAFER & STRONGER COMMUNITIES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

MINUTES of the meeting held on Monday, 12 December 2011 commencing at 9.00 am and finishing at 12.05 pm

Present:

Voting Members:	Councillor Lawrie Stratford – in the Chair
	Councillor Stewart Lilly (Deputy Chairman) Councillor John Goddard Councillor Alyas Ahmed Councillor Susanna Pressel Councillor John Sanders Councillor Bill Service Councillor Alan Thompson Councillor A.M. Lovatt (In place of Councillor Anthony Gearing) Councillor Steve Hayward (In place of Councillor Carol Viney)
Other Members in Attendance:	Councillor Judith Heathcoat
Officers:	
Whole of meeting	John Jackson (Director for Social & Community Services) Karen Warren (Acting County Librarian) Alexandra Bailey (Corporate Performance and Review Manager) Sue Whitehead (Committee Services Manager) Kathrin Luddecke (Scrutiny Officer)

The Scrutiny Committee considered the matters, reports and recommendations contained or referred to in the agenda for the meeting, together with an additional document listing speakers from the public tabled at the meeting and agreed as set out below. Copies of the agenda and reports and additional document are attached to the signed Minutes.

167/11 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND TEMPORARY APPOINTMENTS
(Agenda No. 1)

Apologies were received from Councillor Anthony Gearing (Councillor Sandy Lovatt as substitute) and Councillor Carol Viney (Councillor Steve Hayward as substitute).

168/11 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST - SEE GUIDANCE NOTE ON THE BACK PAGE
(Agenda No. 2)

Cllr Heathcoat noted that as Cabinet Member whose portfolio includes library services she had not participated in discussions on Faringdon library.

John Jackson also expressed a personal interest in Faringdon library as a user of that library.

169/11 MINUTES
(Agenda No. 3)

The Chairman reminded the committee that the minutes of the last meeting would be considered at its next regular meeting in February, as agreed.

170/11 SPEAKING TO OR PETITIONING THE COMMITTEE
(Agenda No. 4)

The following speakers addressed the committee, as agreed by the chairman:
- Dr Judith Wardle (Save Oxfordshire Libraries)
- Trevor Craig
- Julia Drown (Old Marston)
- Paddy Landau (Save Kennington Library)
- Philip Pinney (Friends of Watlington Library)
- Christopher Quinton (Woodcote)

Local Members:
- Cllr Neil Owen (Charlbury)
- Cllr Ian Hudspeth (Woodstock)

Dr Lawrence Reavill (Goring Parish Council) has asked to speak but was unable to be present. Ian Hill (Watlington Parish Council) had asked to speak but then agreed that Mr Pinney would also speak on his behalf.

Key issues referred to in the discussion included:

Dependence on volunteers
- Fear there could be a lack of volunteers to be found
- Volunteers' skills, need for extensive training
- Lone working concerns
- Friends of libraries groups already stretched
- Core libraries not being asked to use volunteers for core services

Consultation
- Criteria based on need, current usage not taken into account
- Rural bias in the methodology used to assess the requirements of the library service
- Smaller libraries affected disproportionately

- Cuts should be evenly distributed across all libraries
- Not sufficient account taken of proposed housing growth

Costs and funding
- Benchmarking of service costs against other authorities
- Savings difficult to deliver

Dr Wardle noted that Save Oxfordshire Libraries was not a political group. They were concerned that the quantitative analysis had favoured urban libraries. 16 friends of libraries groups had said that the proposals would not work and four groups that they could cover 1/3 of hours with volunteers; more would not be sustainable.

Mr Craig contended that the figures did not stack up with a shortfall in proposed savings. He questioned the proportion of funding going to back office functions, making comparisons with other authorities, and suggesting that savings could be achieved by looking further at management and professional support services rather than recruiting volunteers.

Ms Drown was concerned about difficulties of relying on volunteers with a varied range of skills, the need to train them and concerns about how the council would fulfil its duty of care towards volunteers. In her view the proposals were impractical and projected savings exaggerated.

Mr Landau noted that while the Friends of Kennington Library were in strong position, already raising funds for a library with low overheads in shared premises; they would struggle with a 50% cut as existing volunteers were already stretched. He asked that a "one size fits all" approach to implementing the proposals should be avoided.

Mr Pinney explained that Friends of Watlington Library hade been set up 12 years ago to save it from closure. It had raised funds to have the building restored, extended and self-service introduced from October last year. He referred to the strength of local feeling and concerns about proposed reductions in staff.

Speaking on behalf of Mr Hill, Mr Pinney welcomed changes from previous proposals but expressed concerns about the impact of savings on rural communities. He thought the parameters used were biased against rural areas and proposals did not address the spread of rural populations or the role of larger rural settlements as hubs.

Mr Quinton expressed concerns about the potential impact of the proposed changes on the agreement with Langtree school where Woodcote Library is based. He also questioned how much working with volunteers would cost, suggesting there could be no or insignificant savings from the proposals.

Councillor Owen welcomed the modifications to proposals but was also concerned about the impact on rural communities and about contingency plans if insufficient numbers of volunteers came forward.

Councillor Hudspeth also expressed concerns about the methodology, in particular in defining the catchment area for libraries and its impact on rural communities like Woodstock, and pointed out the infrequency of public transport to places other than

central Oxford. He felt that developing a 21st century library service required a "can do" approach, such as looking more closely into working with others such as the universities.

171/11 PROPOSALS FOR THE FUTURE OF THE LIBRARY SERVICE
(Agenda No. 5)

The committee discussed the changes proposed to Cabinet for the Library Service at some length. The Director for Social & Community Services, John Jackson, gave a comprehensive presentation on the Cabinet report. He explained how proposals had changed, taking into account:

- Public reaction to initial proposals a year ago and responses to the consultation over the summer
- Additional resources available as reflected in February's council budget
- Library service legislation now tested in court

The council had now defined that its 'comprehensive and efficient network' of library provision was made up of 22 core libraries. No alternative definition had been put forward, except the suggestion to base it on usage figures rather than need.

John Jackson noted that the Wirral case suggested a comprehensive and efficient network should be based on need not current usage; a wide range of factors influenced usage figures of any given library. The case also showed that clear robust criteria should apply across all libraries without exception. In terms of the concerns expressed about the council's data analysis, he referred to the full response made available on the website and included as Annex 6 of the Cabinet report.

He offered a detailed overview of the costs of the library service, concluding that genuine back office functions made up less than 10% of the overall cost of the service - a comparable figure to other authorities.

In response to suggestions that reductions should be shared across the whole service, officers had advised that the core network should be resourced properly. The introduction of self-service had also brought savings in these 22 libraries.

However, the council wished to see the other 21 libraries remain open as valued community assets. It proposed to continue funding these, 81% of the costs of community and community plus libraries, and ensure they had full access to the library system. The proposals included an increase in the proportion of paid staff to volunteers, at an additional cost of £67,000. It was noted that it was up to town and parish councils to decide if they wanted to provide additional funding through their precept.

Karen Warren gave further details on how the council was, and proposes to, train and support library volunteers. She noted that there already were 140 active volunteers and 24 in process of being trained. Training would be mostly in-house and where this was not possible, e.g. with First Aid and Fire, it would be held as locally as possible. Support could be tailored for individual libraries and guidance would be light-touch. There would be clear support and a communication tree for any cases of lone working, where this could not be avoided. Officers were confident that volunteering in

a library would be an attractive option and the service would be able to attract and retain sufficient volunteers. 461 potential volunteers had come forward in the consultation.

During the subsequent debate, members raised further questions and sought clarity and reassurance in a number of areas. These included support for volunteers, cost of CRB checks, qualifications and pay of library staff, rural need, the mobile library service, the ability to work with individual libraries (including those located in schools) to tailor proposals and future housing growth.

In conclusion, members thanked the Cabinet Member and all the officers for their work throughout the consultation, attending numerous public meetings and responding to a large number of communications. Members were also appreciative that local concerns had been listened to and that current proposals were positive:

- All libraries are to remain open
- Roll out of self-service will be easier to use for volunteers
- Increased proportion of staff in community and community plus libraries than previously proposed
- Implementation over a period of time, giving greater opportunity to develop solutions appropriate to each library
- Quantitative data to be reviewed on a four year basis or sooner if circumstances dictate (as noted in the recommendations to Cabinet)

Points that came out of the committee's discussion to be taken forward included:

- Officers to ensure that suggestions for potential further savings, including those made by friends groups, through sharing resources with neighbouring authorities or further collocation are explored
- Officers to ensure that when proposals are implemented they are fine-tuned to local circumstances with communities concerned
- Scrutiny to ensure the Library Service continues to remain on its forward plan as proposals are implemented
- Officers to look into potential opportunities to bid for one-off funding where appropriate

In summary, most members were satisfied that concerns raised had been answered fully by the officers present. Councillor Lilly proposed and on a vote by a show of hands, the majority supported the recommendations being put to Cabinet in the afternoon by eight votes to two.

.... in the Chair

Date of signing   ....

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SAFER & STRONGER COMMUNITIES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

MINUTES of the meeting held on Thursday, 15 December 2011 commencing at 10.15 am and finishing at 12.00 pm

Present:

Voting Members: Councillor Lawrie Stratford – in the Chair

Councillor Stewart Lilly (Deputy Chairman)
Councillor John Goddard
Councillor Susanna Pressel
Councillor John Sanders
Councillor Alan Thompson
Councillor Patrick Greene (In place of Councillor Carol Viney)
Councillor Nicholas P. Turner (In place of Councillor Alyas Ahmed)
Councillor Ian Hudspeth (In place of Councillor Anthony Gearing)

Other Members in Attendance: Councillor Judith Heathcoat

Officers:

Whole of meeting   Sue Scane, Lorna Baxter (Chief Executive's Office)
Dave Etheridge, Nathan Travis, Richard Webb (Fire & Rescue / Community Safety)
Simon Kearey, Karen Warren (Community Services)
Huw Jones, Vicky Field (Adult Learning)
Peter Clarke, Jacquie Bugeja (Coroners & Registration)
Kathrin Luddecke (Scrutiny Officer)

The Scrutiny Committee considered the matters, reports and recommendations contained or referred to in the agenda for the meeting and agreed as set out below. Copies of the agenda and reports are attached to the signed Minutes.

172/11 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND TEMPORARY APPOINTMENTS
(Agenda No. 1)

Councillor Bill Service had sent his apologies. Councillor Ian Hudspeth substituted for Councillor Anthony Gearing, Councillor Nicholas Turner for Councillor Alyas Ahmed and Councillor Patrick Greene for Councillor Carol Viney.

173/11 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST - SEE GUIDANCE NOTE ON THE BACK PAGE
(Agenda No. 2)

Councillor Turner declared an interest as the chairman of the Mill Arts Centre, representing the county council.

Councillor Stratford declared an interest in case of substantive discussions of the Citizen's Advice Bureau.

174/11 SPEAKING TO OR PETITIONING THE COMMITTEE
(Agenda No. 3)

There were no requests to speak.

175/11 SERVICE AND RESOURCE PLANNING 2012/13 - 2016/17
(Agenda No. 4)

Lorna Baxter gave an overview of the report to the committee and responded to members' questions for clarifications.

The discussion was then grouped by service area. Officers gave presentations containing an overview of proposals and responded to questions by members, as follows:

1. Fire & Rescue - Dave Etheridge, Nathan Travis
2. Community Safety – Dave Etheridge, Richard Webb
3. Community Services – Simon Kearey, Karen Warren
4. Adult Learning – Huw Jones, Vicky Field
5. Registration & Coroners – Peter Clarke, Jacquie Bugeja

Summary of discussion:

Members welcomed the focus on prevention within Fire & Rescue but were concerned that it would be difficult to deal with future pressures without affecting frontline services. Officers responded that they were looking to secure national funding to deal with specific pressures, such as upgrading the control room, and to continue making the most of being part of the council rather than stand-alone.

Members were reassured that in Community Safety changes to the service were being managed through smarter working, using intelligence to target investigations and clearer prioritisation.

Proposals for the Library Services had been discussed in detail at Monday's scrutiny meeting. Further details relating to council support for arts organisations will be made available to interested members.

Adult Learning and the Registration Service are part self-funding services. Members commended Jacquie Bugeja, Head of Registration and Coroner's Service, for her work including delivering on the national "Tell us once" initiative as an early adopter.

The joint effort made by officers and members in working with partners on repatriations was also recognized.

The committee **agreed to support the proposals made for the services listed above in principle**. In giving their support, members stated that:

- The committee wished to receive further information about the potential and experience of transferring council run Gypsy and Traveller sites to the private sector
- The proposed review of the mobile library service should be brought to scrutiny early next year
- The Library Service should continue to remain on the committee's forward plan as proposals are implemented, as will Adult Learning
- They asked services to consider, and keep under review, whether there are any opportunities to generate income

.... in the Chair

Date of signing ....

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Division(s): ALL

SAFER AND STRONGER COMMUNITIES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
13th February 2012

Report on the use of the Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act 2000 by Oxfordshire County Council

Report by Director of Social and Community Services

Introduction

1.   The Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act 2000 ('the Act') creates the legal framework for the lawful use of covert surveillance and access to telecommunications data by public authorities. Prior to the introduction of this Act, the use of covert surveillance and access to communications data were not controlled by statute. Codes of Practice issued under this Act contain the detail that public authorities must have regard to when using covert surveillance or accessing communications data.

2.   There is no direct sanction against Local Authorities within the Act for failing to comply with its provisions. Nevertheless covert surveillance or accessing communications data by its nature is an interference of a person's right to a private and family life guaranteed under Article 8 of the European Convention on Human Rights. The consequences of not obtaining prior authorisation in accordance with the Act may mean that the action is unlawful by virtue of Section 6 of the Human Rights Act 1998 i.e. a failure by the Authority to conduct this work in accordance with human rights conventions.

3.   The Codes of Practice under the Act require that elected members review the Authority's use of the Act periodically and review the Authority's policy annually. This paper provides a summary of the activities undertaken by Oxfordshire County Council that fall within the scope of this Act for the period from October 2010 to July 2011 inclusive.

Exempt Information

This report contains no exempt information.

Use of the Act by Oxfordshire County Council

4.   The table below summarises the applications for activities falling within the scope of the Act that have been considered by the designated authorising officers. Some explanation of common activities may assist in understanding the activities concerned.

5.   Under-age sales test purchasing in shops. Trading Standards will carry out test purchases of age restricted goods on a number of occasions throughout the year. Such test purchases are one aspect of the work that the service

carries out with the aim of reducing the availability of age restricted goods to persons below the legal minimum age. The age restricted goods concerned may include cigarettes, knives, alcohol, fireworks and solvents. Test purchasing and other activities are carried out in order for the service to meet its responsibilities to enforce age restricted sales legislation and to support community safety strategies.

6.   Premises are selected for test normally as a result of intelligence or complaints from the public, but some routine market surveillance is also carried out. The operation involves a young volunteer attempting to buy the age restricted product whilst being observed by a trading standards enforcement officer. The surveillance being authorised is the observation of the young volunteer attempting to purchase an age restricted product. This takes place in the open area of the shop and no surveillance takes place other than in areas of the premises that the public can enter. Therefore, the actual surveillance is of minimal intrusiveness. No recording equipment is used.

7.   Should a premises fail a test purchase officers will investigate the circumstances of the sale (e.g. what training has been provided to the sales assistant concerned, what policies and procedures have been adopted by the business, etc.). When test purchasing alcohol, we normally work with the Police and the sales assistant who sells the product will be issued with a fixed penalty notice by the Police Officer present. Following investigation of the circumstances of the sale a decision is made on the most appropriate course of action to take to prevent further illegal sales by the business.

8.   <u>Doorstep crime related surveillance</u>. It is known that doorstep criminals repeat victimise vulnerable people. Frequently, Trading Standards is made aware of an incident at a time when it is suspected that the suspect will return, normally to attempt to obtain further money from the victim. In these circumstances surveillance is carried out at the victim's home, with their consent, to attempt to identify and detain the suspect. The victim's family and regular visitors to the victim's property are made aware of the surveillance in order to minimise intrusion.

9.   Please note that the following summary does not include authorisations granted in relation to matters that may result in legal action where reporting the surveillance might compromise any such legal action.

Date	Service requesting authorisation	Description of activity	Granted/ refused	Outcome
25/1/11	Trading Standards	Visits to a residential address in Oxford in order to note details of cars associated with the property. Allegation received that the occupier of the property is operating a car sales business from his home misleading sellers that the cars being sold are private sales.	Granted	Details of vehicles associated with premises obtained but these failed to establish that cars were being sold at the address.

19/5/11	Trading Standards	Installation of a covert camera to record visitors to a doorstop crime victim's property (Bladon).	Granted	Suspects did not return to property. Camera removed.
16/6/11	Trading Standards	Installation of a covert camera to record visitors to a doorstop crime victim's property (Abingdon).	Granted	Suspects did not return to property. Camera removed.
13/7/11	Trading Standards	Under-age sales test purchasing exercise relating to cigarettes and vending machines. Oxford/ Bicester. (16 premises)	Granted	8 premises tested. Sale at one premises only. Premises owners warned.
13/7/11	Trading Standards	Under-age sales test purchasing exercise relating to cigarettes. Oxford. (1 premises)	Granted	8 premises tested. 1 sale. Premises owners warned.
19/8/11	Trading Standards	Installation of a covert camera to record visitors to a doorstop crime victim's property (Blewbury).	Granted	Camera activated by return of suspect but identity not confirmed.
23/8/11	Trading Standards	Authorisation to develop contact with Facebook user alleged to be selling counterfeit products via Facebook.	Granted	Facebook page removed before officer established contact.
13/10/11	Trading Standards	Under-age sales test purchasing exercise relating to cigarettes. Oxford/ Abingdon/ Didcot/ Witney/ Grove. (9 premises)	Granted	8 premises tested. 2 sales, 6 refusals. Premises owners warned and repeat tests to be arranged.
2/11/11	Trading Standards	Installation of a covert camera to record visitors to a doorstep crime victim's property (Ducklington)	Granted	Camera not activated and removed.
2/11/11	Trading Standards	Under-age sales test purchasing exercise relating to fireworks. Oxford/ Abingdon/ Bicester/ Chipping Norton. (10 premises).	Granted	No sales made.
18/12/11	Trading Standards	Under-age sales test purchase exercise relating to tobacco products. 4 premises (Oxford).	Granted	2 sales made. 2 refusals. Premises owners visited and warned.
18/12/11	Trading Standards	Under-age sales test purchase exercise relating to alcohol. Oxford. (6 premises).	Granted	1 sale made. Premises owners advised and premises to be retested.
18/12/11	Trading Standards	Under-age sales test purchase exercise relating to alcohol. Banbury. (18 premises).	Granted	10 premises visited. 1 sale. Premises owner warned and follow-up test planned.

NAME: John Jackson
Director of Social and Community Services

Background papers: None
Contact Officer: Richard Webb; Acting Head of Trading Standards and Community Safety

January 2012

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Division(s): ALL

Oxfordshire Museums Service Update Paper January 2012

SAFER & STRONGER COMMUNITIES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
13 FEBRUARY 2012

OXFORDSHIRE MUSEUMS STRATEGY

1.   Introduction

This paper provides an introduction to the draft Oxfordshire Museums Strategy drawn up by Oxford University Museums, Oxfordshire County Council, Oxford City Council and Cherwell District Council.

2.   Context and background

2.1 At its meeting in September the County Museums Officer explained to the Scrutiny Committee that a final draft of the Oxfordshire Museums Strategy would be made available to Scrutiny for comment following ratification by the directors of the University Museums. This having now been obtained the draft Strategy is presented for comment.

2.2 Oxfordshire is extraordinarily fortunate in the wealth of museums and collections within its boundaries. It boasts the first 'public' museum in Britain, The Ashmolean, collections of international importance at each of the four main Oxford University museums which between them care for c.7 million objects. The County Museums Service cares for collections of regional and local significance representing more than 10,000 years of Oxfordshire's history and is the official repository for the County's archaeology. Museums across the County also hold a number of important specialist collections, including material relating to the Great Western Railway, Morris Motors, William Morris and rowing.

2.3 Many of the smaller independent museums display material of local interest ranging from base ball memorabilia in Chipping Norton Museum to collections of local history in the former market towns of the County including Abingdon, Banbury, Thame, Wallingford, Wantage and Witney. In addition to which a number of smaller volunteer run museums in villages across the county play a key role in creating a sense of place and community in their locality.

2.4 The role of museums has changed significantly in the last 10–15 years. As well as collecting, preserving and sharing rich collections, they now play an increasing role in supporting the development of communities. They can be a place to help shape community identity and bring different community groups together. They can act as a catalyst for regeneration through the creation of new venues and civic spaces, and a resource for developing the skills and confidence of members of those communities.

2.5 Through visits and outreach museums engage with more than 80% of the state schools in Oxfordshire and 88% of schools in key areas of deprivation. Collectively museums engage with more than 200 community groups countywide providing a variety of opportunities for learning and enjoyment particularly for vulnerable adults.

2.6 Museums make a significant contribution to Oxfordshire's economy by welcoming more than 2.5 million visitors a year and attracting in excess of £80 million in capital investment in the past decade.

3.   Collaborative working

3.1 With 40 museums across the county, there are a number of unifying arrangements and partnerships, notably between the County Council and Oxford University; between the County Museums Service and museums operated by local authorities in Abingdon, Banbury and Oxford; and the Oxfordshire Museums Council (OMC), which as a countywide network aims to work with and support all museums in the County. The Museum Development Service, working across Oxfordshire, Berkshire and Buckinghamshire, currently funded through Renaissance by MLA, is managed and hosted by the County Museum Service. Relationships with neighbouring local authorities and museum services are strong.

3.2 The Oxfordshire Museums Strategy (the Strategy) has been developed against the background of almost 50 years of collaboration and co-operative working between the University Museums and the County's Museum Service. Loans from University collections have featured in both permanent displays and temporary touring exhibitions exploring various aspects of Oxfordshire's past. By sharing curatorial expertise we have added to our knowledge and understanding of collections relating to the County and shared this information with increasingly broader audiences. Knowledge and skills sharing has also enabled the development of extensive, high quality education and access programmes.

3.3 The County Museums Service has a strong working relationship stretching back over almost 30 years with the local authority museums countywide providing loans for display, temporary touring exhibitions and expertise in collections care. Through the work of curatorial advisors and its support of the Oxfordshire Museums Council and the Museum Development Service it also provides support and advice to the wider museum community throughout the county and arranges loans as well as ongoing support and advice to many of the County's smaller volunteer run museums.

3.4 Oxford University Museums, a 'hub' museum, have been working with the Oxfordshire County Museums Service and Oxford City Council, with Renaissance funding, to reach target communities in the city. Building on that work, and in preparation for a bid to the Arts Council for Major Grant funding, in the Transition year 2011/12, the County Museums Service and University Museums have initiated a joint countywide project to increase access to collections – this particular project is focusing on 'Accessories' and drawing on collections from museums across the county. The project is seen as a pilot for future work.

The Strategy builds on all these partnerships.

4.   The need for a Strategy

4.1 As the desire for, and the potential benefits of, partnership working across the county's museums has developed so has the need to articulate a single vision for all the collections in Oxfordshire - County, independent and University - which sets broad objectives for museum provision and development over the next five years. This will then form the basis upon which a detailed action plan can be devised and agreed by all to ensure that the county's museum resources continue to be central to the well-being of its communities.

4.2 The Strategy has been drawn up by Oxfordshire County Council, Oxford City Council and Cherwell District Council and a draft was submitted as part of the successful ASPIRE consortium bid to the Arts Council for major grant funding.

5.   Approach to Consultation

5.1 In shaping the Strategy officers have been keen to ensure the involvement of various stakeholders. Initial thoughts were shared with officers from the County's museums service, Oxford City Council, Cherwell District Council and senior staff from the University Museums and a representative from the Oxfordshire Museums Council

5.2 Following preparation of an agreed draft of the Strategy further consultation took place with members of the Museums Joint Working Group and subsequently with representatives of other key heritage providers including the Oxford Preservation Trust, the River and Rowing Museum (Henley), Blenheim Palace, Oxford Inspires, Oxford Brookes University and Modern Art Oxford, after which the final version of the Strategy was drafted for approval and ratification by the relevant governing bodies.

6.   The Vision

The Strategy creates a vision
- for Oxfordshire to be recognised nationally and internationally as a place of museum excellence
- to ensure that the museums and collections are recognised as vital to the social well-being and economic development of Oxfordshire and the region
- to improve the sustainability of museums and collections
- to inspire visitors through the creative use of collections
- to actively engage school pupils, students and families
- to actively support and encourage research both internally and externally
- to maximise public access through effective marketing and outreach to reach the widest possible audiences
- to achieve excellence across the museum and heritage sector in Oxfordshire and beyond by encouraging a spirit of cooperation and collaboration.

7.   Implementing the Strategy

7.1 It is not intended that the Strategy should dictate the direction of the county's museums, but it is hoped that it will form an overarching framework into which activity can fit and within which developments and projects can be presented to potential funders.

7.2 The Strategy advocates working with the local people to identify community priorities, building on the strengths of each partner and in discussion with stakeholders. It advocates a creative dialogue with partners from the wider heritage and arts sectors.

7.3 It will ensure that the greatest educational and cultural benefits are provided for the County's residents, the maximum economic impact of museums is achieved by supporting the local tourist economy, and that the partner and local authority strategic priorities are addressed.

7.4 It is envisaged that much can be achieved through more joint working to encourage the sharing of skills and knowledge, whilst the achievement of other goals will require additional external investment – hence the recently successful joint University and County Museums Service consortium bid to the Arts Council (under the title ASPIRE) for major grant funding.

8.   ACE Major Grant Award

8.1 On 23rd January the Arts Council announced that the Oxford Aspire Consortium, had been selected as one 16 recipients of a Renaissance Major Grant award. Those selected will together receive approximately £20 million a year in funding for the next three years as part of its Renaissance programme for regional museums.

8.2 Successful recipients of this funding will be expected to make a significant contribution to the delivery of the Arts Council's strategic goals as set out in *Culture, knowledge and understanding: great museums and libraries for everyone (Arts Council September 2011).* Discussions are now taking place between the Consortium and the Arts Council to refine the programmes of work to be delivered and the funding available. We will keep Scrutiny informed of the outcome of these discussions

Action

Scrutiny is asked to comment on the attached Strategy and its future implementation.

CAROL ANDERSON
Museums Service Manager
Tel: 01993 814105
M 07795 127 433

January 2012

Oxfordshire Museums Strategy
A vision for our collections

1.0   Background

2.0   Vision

3.0   Recommendations

4.0   Actions

Appendices
1. Corporate Priorities
2. Partnerships
3. List of Oxfordshire museums and historic houses

1.0 Background

The role of museums has changed over time and never more so than in the last 10–15 years. As well as their traditional role of collecting, preserving and sharing rich collections, museums now find that they play an increasing role in supporting the development of communities. Museums can be a place to help shape community identity and bring different community groups together, a catalyst for regeneration through the creation of new venues and civic spaces, and a resource for developing the skills and confidence of members of those communities. (Museums Association, 2011)

The purpose of the Oxfordshire Museums Strategy is to create a vision for museums in Oxfordshire which will:

- Ensure that the museum resources of Oxfordshire are recognised as central to the well-being of the county's communities

- Set broad objectives for museum provision and development over the next five years upon which a detailed action plan can be based

The Strategy has been drawn up by Oxfordshire County Council, Oxford City Council, Cherwell District Council and Oxford University, and is intended to reinforce the value of greater partnership working and cooperation. The strategy must also reflect the intentions of others working in the museums/heritage sector, including other local authorities, independent museums and other organisations (eg the National Trust). The success of the strategy will depend heavily on the degree to which all are willing and able to play their part in its achievement.

Consultation

Following preparation of an agreed draft of the Strategy there will be a process of dissemination and consultation across the museum sector and before the Strategy is taken to governing bodies for approval and ratification.

Oxfordshire's Museums

Oxfordshire is extraordinarily fortunate in the wealth of museums and collections within its boundaries. It boasts the first 'public' museum in Britain, The Ashmolean, collections of international importance at each of the four main Oxford University museums (all designated), significant 'county' and local collections and a number of important specialist collections – including the Great Western Railway material at Didcot, the Morris Motors Collection at the Bus Museum and Nuffield Place, and the rowing collections at Henley. Many of the smaller independent museums hold significant collections of local and regional interest such as the baseball memorabilia in Chipping Norton Museum. There are also notable collections in private houses open to the public and in properties owned by the National Trust.

With more than 40 museums across the county, there are a number of unifying arrangements and partnerships, notably between the County Council and Oxford University (the Museums Partnership) – particularly relating to the 'core' bid; between the County Museums Service and a number of local museums (previously part of the County service) and overseen by the Museums Joint Working Group, and the Oxfordshire Museums Council (OMC), which as a countywide network aims to work with and support all museums across Oxfordshire. The Museum Development Service, working across Oxfordshire, Berkshire and Buckinghamshire, currently funded through Renaissance by MLA, is hosted by the County Council, on behalf of the partnership between the County and Oxford University. Relationships with neighbouring local authorities and museum services are strong.

Oxford University Museums, a 'hub' museum, have been working with the Oxfordshire County Museums Service and Oxford City Council, with Renaissance funding, to reach target communities in the city. Building on that work, and in preparation for the bid for 'core' status, in the Transition year 2011/12, the County Museums Service and University Museums have initiated a joint countywide project to increase access to collections – this particular project focusing on 'Accessories' and drawing on collections from all museums. The project is seen as a pilot for future work. This Strategy builds on all those partnerships.

The importance and benefits of museums:

- The museum resources of Oxfordshire are of international, national and local significance – ensuring their preservation is a responsibility of this generation for future generations
- Oxfordshire's museums attract more than 2.5 million tourists and visitors annually making a significant contribution to the local economy
- The museum collections inspire creativity and learning, they provide a sense of place and engender a sense of belonging and pride in our localities and culture
- The collections generate respect for histories and cultures different from our own
- Understanding our past helps to inform the present and future
- Museum resources are a vital stimulus for building useful knowledge and skills.

2.0 The Vision

Our vision is:
- for Oxfordshire to be recognised nationally and internationally as a place of museum excellence
- to ensure that the museums and collections are recognised as vital to the social well - being and economic development of Oxfordshire and the region
- to improve the sustainability of museums and collections
- to inspire visitors through the creative use of collections
- to actively engage school pupils, students and families
- to actively support and encourage research both internally and externally
- to maximise public access through effective marketing and outreach to reach the widest possible audiences
- to achieve excellence across the museum and heritage sector in Oxfordshire and beyond by encouraging a spirit of cooperation and collaboration.

3.0 Implementation

This Strategy advocates working with the local people to identify community priorities, building on the strengths of each partner and in discussion with stakeholders. It advocates a creative dialogue with partners from the wider heritage and arts sectors. It will ensure that the greatest educational and cultural benefits are provided for the County's residents, the maximum economic impact of museums is achieved by supporting the local tourist economy, and the partner and Local Authority strategic priorities are addressed.

4.0 Recommendations

4.1 Investment in collections and knowledge:

- Oxfordshire Museums will create a centre of excellence, building on the strengths listed above, the partnerships and diversity across the county. Such a world-class aspiration can be achieved through strengthening the partnerships and continuous investment.
- The success of our aspiration to release the full potential of our collections is dependent on the knowledge and research linked to those collections. Investment in staff, training, skill sharing and research opportunities is essential.

4.2 Investment in inspiration and learning:

Oxfordshire Museums will deliver or facilitate:
- higher achievement in education – cooperation towards maintaining and developing learning opportunities for schools is essential
- Adult learning, both formal and informal,
- Reminiscence and well-being work with older people
- Services to groups of people traditionally excluded from museums
- Support for significant loans from partner (and other) museums.

4.3 Improvements to access:

Access to the collections will be improved through:
- integrating access to databases across the county's collections
- increasing the quantity of collections stored in a digital format to be available online
- prioritising the display of stored collections
- actively seeking opportunities to include collection display in planned building development.

4.4 Improvements to collections care:

Oxfordshire Museums will strengthen the care and co-ordination of collecting across museums through:
- review of collections countywide to identify the nature and location of the county's portable heritage
- improved co-ordination of the county's archaeological archive and care of the collections as a county wide resource.

4.5 Creation of a Collections Trust:

Oxfordshire Museums will develop a collections purchase trust for Oxfordshire, with the intention of assisting the acquisition of objects for Oxfordshire's museums.

5.0 Actions

Oxfordshire's museums will

5.1 develop a collections purchase trust for Oxfordshire, with the intention of assisting the acquisition of objects for Oxfordshire's museums

5.2 share knowledge and skills by building on the Accessories Project and encouraging specialist curators to share their collections knowledge

5.3 maintain and further develop the excellent learning opportunities offered by museums across the County

5.4 actively co-ordinate their educational offer to schools and families

5.5 continue to improve electronic access to collections and seek a means of creating a single portal for access to all Oxfordshire collections

5.6 seek to maintain appropriate opening hours allowing access to displayed and stored collections

5.7 encourage and promote the sharing of collections between museums

5.8 review collections countywide to identify the nature and location of the county's portable heritage

5.9 improve coordination of the county's archaeological archive and care of the collections as a county wide resource

5.10 share conservation expertise to ensure that all collections in the county are appropriately cared for.

Ver 1.12

APPENDIX ONE

The county's museums, their collections and the services they offer make a significant contribution to achieving the corporate priorities of Oxfordshire's local authorities by

- contributing to the cultural and economic development of Oxford and its region

- raising educational achievement

- improving services and providing opportunities for young people

- reducing the number of young people not in employment, education or training, and improving their skills

- encouraging community self-help and engagement with our communities

- responding to the changing needs of an ageing population

- exploiting the capacity of the museums and their collections to draw in non-traditional audiences

Existing Partnerships and Organisations

There are a number of existing examples of exemplary cooperation as outlined below.

Over the last year, **Oxford University Museums and the County Museums Service** have worked together to support the City Council's Museum of Oxford, particularly through outreach programmes to some of the city's target communities. This work has helped to demonstrate the value of heritage to marginalised communities and community leaders.

The Oxfordshire Museums Council was established more than 30 years ago and formed a model for countywide consultative committees. The Council includes all museums, some 40 in total, publishes an annual publicity leaflet, and organises training and support for the sector.

The County Museums Service works closely with the other local authority supported museums – providing centralised storage and collection care, technical and exhibition services on a cost recovery basis – overseen by a *Museums Joint Working Group* with representatives from all the local authorities in the County, the University and the Oxfordshire Museums Council.

The County Museums Service also works with *Oxford Preservation Trust* supporting community and educational work at Oxford Castle.

The Thames Valley Museums Group (TVMG) was established in 2003 to link museums across the Buckinghamshire, Oxfordshire and Berkshire (BOB) sub region.

The Oxford City and County Archaeological Forum (OCCAF) provides advice and expertise in support of those who are responsible for the care of the County's archaeological heritage and includes representatives from the City, County and University, English Heritage and the Oxford Archaeological and Historical Society

The Portable Antiquities Scheme provides funding in support of a Finds Liaison Officer for Oxfordshire and West Berkshire whose prime task is to record archaeological objects found by members of the public. Every year many hundreds of objects are discovered, many of these by metal-detector users. Such discoveries offer an important source for understanding the County's past. The implementation of the scheme is overseen by a joint committee comprising officers from both authorities and draws specialist support from the University and staff at Oxford Archaeology.

APPENDIX THREE

Museums in Oxfordshire

Abingdon Museum
The Ashmolean Museum
Bampton Community Archive
Banbury Museum
Bate Collection of Musical instruments
Bloxham Village Museum
Champs Chapel Museum
Charlbury Museum
Chipping Norton Museum
Christchurch Picture Gallery
Churchill and Sarsden Heritage Centre
Combe Mill
Didcot Railway Centre
Dorchester Abbey Museum
Hook Norton Brewery Museum
Hook Norton Village Museum
Museum of the History of Science
Museum of Oxford
Northmoor Trust – project timescape
Oxford University Press Museum
Oxford Botanic Gardens
Oxford Bus Museum and Morris Motors
Oxford Castle Unlocked
Oxford University Museum of Natural History
Oxfordshire Museums Resource Centre
Oxfordshire Museum
Pendon Museum
Pitt Rivers Museum
River and Rowing Museum
Soldiers of Oxfordshire Research Centre
Swalcliffe Barn
Swinford Museum
Thame Museum
Tolsey Museum
Tom Brown's School Museum
Vale and Downland Museum
Wallingford Museum
Waterperry Rural Museum
Witney and District Museum

Historic houses with significant museum collections

Blenheim Palace (Trust)
Chastleton (National Trust)
Kelmscott Manor (Society of Antiquaries)
Nuffield Place (National Trust)

Division(s): ALL

OXFORDSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL
SAFER & STRONGER COMMUNITIES
SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

13th FEBRUARY 2012

INTEGRATED RISK MANAGEMENT PLAN (IRMP) OXFORDSHIRE FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITY - DRAFT ACTION PLAN 2012-13

Report by the Business & Improvement Manager – Fire & Rescue

Introduction

1. The Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004 requires the Secretary of State to prepare a Fire and Rescue National Framework to which Fire Authorities must have regard when discharging their functions. The 2008-11 Framework requires each Fire and Rescue Authority to produce a publicly available IRMP. The report proposes a number of projects to be included within the Fire Authority's IRMP for the fiscal year 2012-13.

2. The proposals in the report were agreed in their entirety by the Delegated Cabinet Member for Safer and Stronger Communities, Councillor Judith Heathcoat, on 17th October 2011.

3. The proposals were also presented to the Safer & Stronger Communities Scrutiny Committee on 7th November 2011. Final approval will be sought at full cabinet on 14th February 2012.

4. The agreed proposals within this Action Plan 2012-13 have been subjected to full internal & external consultation for a period of 12 weeks. Cabinet is therefore invited to comment on the proposed Action Plan, consultation responses & management responses to the consultation responses.

5. The Secretary of State initially published the latest Fire and Rescue National Framework in May 2008. The purpose of the Framework was to provide strategic direction from central government whilst ensuring that authorities continue to make local decisions. The Framework set out the Government's objectives for the Fire and Rescue Service and what fire and rescue authorities should do to achieve these objectives. More recently, Ministers have stated that the 2008/11 National Framework remains in force, but the Minister responsible for Fire and Rescue matters no longer expects to enforce the following aspects of it - Regional Management Boards, Equality and Diversity, Workforce Development and Asset management. Whilst there is expected to be a new version of the Framework document released this year the Minister has made it clear that the use of Integrated Risk Management Planning (IRMP) will continue to determine the need for and allocation of local fire prevention, protection

and response resource to allow local decisions to be made by practitioners and elected members on the basis of locally assessed risks and circumstances.

6. Each Fire and Rescue Authority should ensure that the IRMP:
- Is regularly reviewed and revised and reflects up-to-date risk information and evaluation of service delivery outcomes
- Has regard to the risk analyses completed by Local and Regional Resilience Forums including those reported in external Community Risk Registers (CRRs) and internal risk registers, to ensure that civil and terrorist contingencies are captured in their IRMP
- Reflects effective consultation during its development and at all review stages with representatives of all sections of the community and stakeholders
- Demonstrates how prevention, protection and response activities will be best used to mitigate the impact of risk on communities in a cost effective way
- Provides details of how Fire and Rescue Authorities deliver their objectives and meet the needs of communities through working with partners
- Has undergone an effective equality impact assessment process.

7. Fire and Rescue Authorities should review the effectiveness of 'cross-border' integration arrangements with neighbouring authorities and set these out appropriately in their IRMPs.

8. Oxfordshire Fire and Rescue Authority published its strategic IRMP in April 2008 providing the strategic direction for the next five years. This document is subjected to annual review and updated and amended as required. The current strategic IRMP requires no amendment for the fiscal year 2012-13 and will be refreshed as a new strategic document for the fiscal year 2013-14.

9. The projects that have been proposed for the action plan 2012-13 have been subject to consultation for 12 weeks. Oxfordshire Fire Authority have consulted with the following: Neighbouring Fire and Rescue Services & their elected members, district, town and parish councils, businesses, the voluntary sector, all internal staffing groups within Oxfordshire Fire & Rescue Service including representative bodies and members of the public.

10. The Senior Management from Oxfordshire Fire and Rescue Service has responded to the comments made during the consultation period and the responses are available to Cabinet within this report. These responses will also be published on the internet for public access.

11. The following items summarise the projects for inclusion in the IRMP Action Plan for the fiscal year 2012-13. These include a consultation response summary & OFRS senior management response:

- **Project 1: Business Continuity Review**
  Responsible Manager: Area Manager – Business & Improvement

  Objective: To supplement existing arrangements by fundamentally reviewing the business continuity arrangements for Oxfordshire Fire & Rescue Service. This will include capital assets, ICT systems, human resource and neighbouring Fire Authority arrangements as defined with sections 13 and 16 of the Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004.
  Outcome: OFRS will have suitable & sufficient business continuity arrangements in place to deal with planned, unplanned or extreme events.

  Consultation Summary:

  Overall 90% of respondents supported this project proposal and there were no oppositions to the proposal. There were no specific comments made in relation to the objective of this project.

  Management Response:

  N/A as no comments were expressed.

- **Project 2: Recruitment & Advancement Review**
  Responsible Manager: Area Manager – Service Support

  Objective: To fundamentally review firefighter selection, recruitment & advancement within OFRS. Since Fire & Rescue Authorities are no longer constrained by National Firefighter Selection Tests (NFFST) and Advancement & Development Centre's (ADCs)[1] there is a significant opportunity to address areas of concern within the recruitment & advancement process.
  Outcome: A more streamlined & robust recruitment & advancement process that best meets the local needs and circumstances of Oxfordshire Fire & Rescue Service & Oxfordshire County Council.

  Consultation Summary:

  Overall 83% of respondents supported this project proposal and 10% opposed the project proposal. One respondent suggested that there should be linkage with project 6 (Operational Assurance Framework).

  Management Response:

  Whilst this will be an individual project within the 2012-13 IRMP, the Operational Assurance Framework project will certainly include elements of the overall selection, recruitment & advancement strategy.

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[1] This was announced at the Fire Ministerial workshop on 29th July 2010

- **Project 3: Road Traffic Casualty Reduction
  Responsible Manager: Area Manager - Safety**

  Objective: To utilise the recently re-structured Road Safety Team in determining & delivering a comprehensive Road Safety strategy which compliments the '365 alive vision' and the 'Travelling in confidence' strand within the business strategy.
  Outcome: Improved safety education and operational response to RTCs, contributing to the reduction of injuries and fatalities from road related hazards & a societal cost saving to the county of Oxfordshire.

  Consultation Summary:

  Overall 86% of respondents supported this project proposal and just 3% opposed the project proposal. There were no specific comments made in relation to the objective of this project.

  Management Response:

  N/A as no comments were expressed.

- **Project 4: Olympics 2012 Pre-Planning
  Responsible Manager: Area Manager – Operations & Resilience**

  Objective: To fully engage with the Thames Valley Local Resilience Forum, South East Fire & Rescue Authorities and other key partners with regards to Olympic pre-planning within the Thames Valley area.
  Outcome: OFRS will be confident & more effective in its resilience & response arrangements to potential 'major events' at venues in relation to the Olympics 2012.

  Consultation Summary:

  Overall 86% of respondents supported this project proposal and 7% opposed the project proposal. One respondent suggested that we should not be wasting time on this project.

  Management Response:

  Whilst there are no Olympic sporting events taking place in Oxfordshire there will be a procession of the Olympic torch relay which will pass through various routes within Oxfordshire. This is already taking up considerable resource from OFRS with regards to inter-agency pre-planning & response for a potential terrorist attack. OFRS are also working closely with neighbouring Fire & Rescue Services who are holding Olympic sporting events to ensure resilience for the very same reason.

- **Project 5: Retained Duty System (RDS) Availability Review**
  Responsible Manager: Area Manager – Operations & Resilience

  Objective: To fundamentally review the RDS particularly in relation to selection, recruitment (links with project 2), retention, crewing arrangements & support from Wholetime resources. This will include areas such as competence levels & potential revised crewing arrangements for both RDS & Wholetime resources.
  Outcome: A Retained Duty System that best meets the local needs and circumstances of Oxfordshire Fire & Rescue Service & Oxfordshire County Council and the local communities and ensures suitable 'arrangements' are in place as required by Section 2 of the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974, .

  Consultation Summary:

- Overall 79% of respondents supported this project proposal and 10% opposed the project proposal. One respondent suggested that Retained fire-fighters training needs to be reviewed and their training time per week extended.
  A number of Retained Duty System (RDS) personnel have also expressed an interest in being involved in this project.

  Management Response:

  RDS training requirements are currently being reviewed as part of the overall Training Competency Framework (TCF). Senior management also certainly recognise the expertise & experience that RDS personnel can bring. A number of individuals within the RDS have already been identified and invited to work with the responsible manager for this project.

- **Project 6: Operational Assurance Framework**
  Responsible Manager: Area Manager – Projects

  Objective: To develop a strategic operational assurance framework within OFRS to evidence that suitable 'arrangements' are in place as required by Section 2 of the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974, and to maintain and improve fire-fighter safety.
  Outcome: An improvement in the way that OFRS identifies, understands, manages and mitigates risk, leading to improved community safety, operational resilience, service delivery & a safer workforce.

  Consultation Summary:

  Overall 80% of respondents supported this project proposal and 10% opposed the project proposal. One respondent suggested that the wording of the question implies a pre-determined outcome, rather than a process which will generate improvements.

Management Response:

OFRS senior management are committed to ensuring that Fire-fighter safety is of the highest priority. We believe that a comprehensive operational assurance framework will go a long way in determining this whilst also ensuring that we deliver a 1st class operational response to the people who live, work & travel within Oxfordshire.

- **Project 7: Data Sharing to Improve the Safeguarding of Vulnerable Adults & Children**
  Responsible Manager: Area Manager – Safety

  Objective: To review & improve data sharing protocols within OFRS, Social & Community Services and other relevant stakeholders in relation to improving safeguarding arrangements for vulnerable adults & children
  Outcome: A reduction, particularly in relation to the number of fire fatalities & serious injuries within this vulnerable group. Improved protection of vulnerable adults & children for non – fire related events.

  Consultation Summary:

  Overall 86% of respondents supported this project proposal and just 3% opposed the project proposal. There were no specific comments made in relation to the objective of this project.

  Management Response:

  Whilst no specific comments have been made in relation to this consultation it should be noted that OFRS personnel have already made a number of referrals' to safeguarding organisations in relation to concerns regarding vulnerable adults & children. We believe that this project will only strengthen our understanding of such issues and improve our partnership arrangements.

- **Project 8: Review of Incident Command, Baseline Worst Case Operational Scenario Planning Assumptions.**
  Responsible Manager: Area Manager – Operations and Resilience

  Objective: To examine the organisational implications of the nationally prescribed Incident Command System in relation to the agreed baseline worst case scenario planning assumptions.
  Outcome: As required by Section 2 of the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974, organisational evidence and assurance that effective 'arrangements' are identified and implemented to ensure adequate resources for pre-determined attendance levels to operational incidents including officer attendance and command roles.

Consultation Summary:

Overall 79% of respondents supported this project proposal and 7% opposed the project proposal. There were no specific comments made in relation to the objective of this project.

Management Response:

N/A as no comments were expressed.

- **Project 9: Improving Fire Control Resilience**
  Responsible Manager; Deputy Chief Fire Officer

  Objective: To deliver increased resilience in our call receipt, mobilising and incident management arrangements in line with OCC Cabinet requirements based on either a Thames Valley approach or alternative contingency arrangement.

  Outcome: Implementation of arrangements to more effectively handle large volumes of 999 emergency calls and to increase the abilities of partners, if necessary, to receive calls and mobilise fire engines on Oxfordshire's behalf. Overall public safety will be enhanced by increased resilience

  Consultation Summary:

  Overall 68% of respondents supported this project proposal and 25% opposed the project proposal. There were no specific comments made in relation to the objective of this project.

  Management Response:

  Whilst no specific comments have been made in relation to this consultation it should be noted that this project will also be subject to separate consultation, scrutiny arrangements & final approval on the options recommended via full cabinet.

  Overall Consultation

  A full list of responses to the consultation can be found in annex A of this report. Management will address these responses where possible and these will be shared on the consultation response pages of Oxfordshire County Council's public website but are not included within this report.

Financial and Staff Implications

12. Each project will fully recognise the prevailing economic constraints, delivering efficiencies or allowing existing/additional services to be delivered more effectively. If any budgetary pressures result from the implementation of these projects, they will be managed within existing

budgets or flagged up to Cabinet through the annual Service Resource and Planning process.

RECOMMENDATION

13. That the agreed proposals be adopted in the final version of the IRMP Action Plan 2012-13 subject to full cabinet approval. The committee is therefore invited to comment on the Action Plan, consultation & management responses.

Mat Carlile
Business & Improvement Manager – Fire & Rescue

Background papers:

National Framework document for the Fire and Rescue Service
Oxfordshire Fire Authority Integrated Risk Management Plan 2008-13
The Fire and Rescue Service National Framework 2008-11.

Contact Officer: Mat Carlile 01865 855211

January 2012

Annex A

IRMP 2012-2013 Consultation Responses

Question:

Please let us know what areas you think we should consider for inclusion in our Integrated Risk Management Planning?

Responses:

- Community safety the elderly and children's education
- Given the resource pool available via the large number of part-time employees (RDS) - I wonder if there are opportunities available to draw on that resource for project work related to the IRMP e.g. use of specialists or those with specific knowledge. Also, how does funding come in to the plan? Given more or less funding may make a significant difference in the outcomes.
- Time to arrive at a fire, it's too long.
- All the areas listed in the report.
- Flood response.
- The IRMP is focused on risk reduction and mitigation. The 365alive vision is delivering and I would like to see a focus on community responding to medical emergencies. With enhanced emergency lifesaving skills to (include defibrillation) many lives could be saved. This would embed us into the communities we serve. I fully support the integration into the County Council structure. The performance pledge could be included into the worst case scenario planning assumptions. End.
- This consultation does not ask real questions, merely do we support the intention to do a review on what we do, what will the reviews say? They're the real questions. This so called consultation is pointless.
- Firemen (or at least fire appliance drivers!) should be recruited from each local area specifically for their LOCAL KNOWLEDGE - we recently had an 'event' in our town (not a village, a TOWN) where the fire engine passed by our house (not where the incident was) THREE TIMES because the fire engine driver did not know the local streets!!! Local lads/lasses please!!!
- Perhaps consider wider collaboration in terms of generic functions - not just regional but national - such as training, uniform, appliances, tasks such as mobilisations - e.g. pda - national and so on.
- Retained fire-fighters training needs to be reviewed and to extend their training time per week.

Question:

Do you have any further comments you want to make regarding our proposed projects for the 2012 -13 Integrated Risk Management Action Plan?

Responses:

- Why waste time on the Olympics?

- I think there are too many projects listed.
- The reason for opposing Q006 is the wording of the question. It implies a pre-determined outcome, rather than a process which will generate improvements. Q002 is better described, and the two need to be taken together.
- It's too woolly.
- No.
- This survey was not written in plain English which will affect responses.
- No.
- Close a few fire stations and build new ones where they are really needed such as Carterton. The system is antiquated.
- This may not be the correct forum, but do you think that the retained cover at Bicester will be adequate, bearing in mind the future growth of new residential estates and the eco town which I believe are predominantly built of timber construction.
- Who could NOT support the fire service and what they want to do to improve the service and their own future?! However, knowing how 'marketing types' write some surveys to favour a 'positive' result, I was slightly sceptical about the way the questions were all worded, so that only a moron could not answer 'yes' (full support) to all the questions! Good luck and thanks for your on-going hard work!

Division(s): ALL

SAFER AND STRONGER COMMUNITIES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – 13TH FEBRUARY 2012

PROPOSAL FOR THE CREATION OF A JOINT TRADING STANDARDS SERVICE WITH BUCKINGHAMSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

Report by Director for Social and Community Services

Introduction

1. During 2011, research was carried out into options for formal joint working with another local authority in order to minimise the impact of future efficiency savings on the outcomes achieved by the Trading Standards Service. Finding new ways of working and meeting savings requirements continues to be a high priority for the public sector as a whole. The aim of this research into joint service options for Trading Standards was to seek to maintain high quality services for the people and businesses of Oxfordshire through rethinking how those services are delivered.

2. This paper outlines the proposal to create a joint Trading Standards Service with Buckinghamshire County Council. The proposal will be considered by Cabinet In March.

3. The proposals outline a 2 stage approach to create a joint service. As an interim measure, during the period required to prepare the infrastructure for a full joint service, it is proposed that a Memorandum of Understanding based arrangement is put in place from 1st April 2012. Under this Memorandum of Understanding a joint senior management team will be formed to manage the services in both Counties and this joint management team will integrate the support processes and functions where possible in advance of the full joint service being created.

Background

The Changing National Context

4. A government consultation on changes to the consumer protection landscape was published in 2011. This consultation is likely to result in a different relationship between the local, national and regional bodies involved in consumer protection work.

5. One of the main recommendations of this consultation is the creation of a structure to support cross border working between Trading Standards

Services and regional 'centres of excellence' who can lead on tackling large scale regional or specialist crime.

6. A National Audit Office report states that 70 per cent of the estimated total of detriment suffered by consumers is across local authority cross-borders.

7. Closer working with a neighbouring authority is likely to maximise our resilience and our ability to tackle regional crime that affects Oxfordshire residents, as well as improve our chances of bringing some of the redirected central Government funding to Oxfordshire.

8. Work during 2011 explored the benefits and costs of different shared service models. This research was undertaken in partnership with Buckinghamshire Trading Standards Service. An options paper was produced proposing 3 different options:
   (a) Option 1- A Commissioned Service
   (b) Option 2- A Shared or Joint Service
   (c) Option 3- A Shared Management Team

9. The Cabinet Member for Safer and Stronger Communities was involved in this research work, It was decided that option 2, a fully shared service, offered the most benefits to Oxfordshire and this option has now been explored in more depth.

10. The main benefits from adopting a joint service are outlined later in this report. The primary consideration behind the proposal to develop a joint service is the better outcomes that can be achieved for consumers and businesses in Oxfordshire should a joint service be adopted as opposed to managing future efficiency savings in isolation. A joint service will maximise the service's potential to maintain performance and levels of service to consumers and businesses through sharing expertise and specialist staff. Shared services also have greater built in resilience and flexibility in service provision through larger pools of staff available to respond to needs.

11. There is also the possibility of engaging with other local Trading Standards Services when we have developed a clear plan and future delivery model to gauge whether other authorities would want to participate. This could offer opportunities for further improvements.

12. A key driver of the discussions held with Buckinghamshire has been the need to maintain a critical mass within each service. As resources reduce, each service is required prioritise, raising the level at which the service will intervene in an issue which is causing harm to local consumers and businesses. As a predominantly reactive service, should the resources available diminish too significantly, preventative work will reduce and new issues which currently demand a response could be left unaddressed. Working jointly with another service should mitigate these effects to some extent.

Customer Needs from the Trading Standards Service

13. Following is a summary of some of the changing aspects of the demands on the Trading Standards Service.

(a) Our Doorstep Crime Team received 524 reports of doorstep crimes during 2010/11 and saved £128,000 by way of responding to these incidents. This area of work is increasing year on year.

(b) Consumer complaints received that required investigation rose from 2667 in 2009/10 to 3294 (up 23%).

(c) 72% of consumers in Oxfordshire report that they are confident that they can buy accurately described goods or services in Oxfordshire without problems arising and 78% state that they are confident that they can by safe goods in Oxfordshire. However, only 39% and 47% report the same confidence when purchasing on-line. As on-line activity increases, so does web based crime.

(d) Requests for support from businesses increased to 2091 in the year, up from 1447 the previous year, a rise of 45%. There is a continuing upward trend of increased demand from businesses for support. Responding to the increase in service requests resulted in considerably more time being invested in this service. The importance of investing resources in assisting businesses to operate safely and legally should not be underestimated.

(e) The Service operates Home Authority arrangements with 120 Oxfordshire based businesses to reduce the regulatory burdens on those businesses and provide a conduit for advice and support for that business.

(f) Primary Authority agreements are in place with 3 businesses which enable enhanced 'assured' advice to be provided to those businesses.

(g) 2315 interventions with businesses were completed during 2010/11. These are mainly driven by intelligence.

(h) The service commenced 805 formal investigations during 2009/10 and 44 prosecution cases were completed in that year. The large increase in the number of investigations commenced was mainly a result of the installation of cameras recording weight restriction breaches at Newbridge.

(i) In 2010 the Service took over responsibility for enforcing the requirements of Safety of Sports Grounds Act 1975 from the Emergency Planning Unit.

(j) A number of new No Cold Calling Zones being implemented in the county to counter the threat of doorstep crime and distraction burglary in those communities. These zones will require some on-going support from the service.

(k) Planning and preparation for work arising from the 2012 Olympic Games will be a key priority for 2011/12.

14. As a service we need to be able to adapt and respond to an ever changing market place and varying demands on the service from our customers. A joint service would provide for greater resilience and in built flexibility in order to provide a fit for purpose service to consumers and businesses in Oxfordshire both now and in the future.

Joint Service Project Work to Date

15. It is important that any shared service model provides benefits for Oxfordshire over and above the option of continuing to provide the service as it is currently delivered. To identify those benefits and assess whether each option is 'right' for Oxfordshire, a shared services acceptance criterion was drafted (see appendix 1). It was agreed that any shared services model would only be pursued if it met these criteria.

16. Discussions were held with Buckinghamshire Trading Standards since they appeared to be the best option for any joint working proposals with the highest commonality with Oxfordshire County Council. Gloucestershire were also broadly interested in shared service arrangements, and have kept a watching brief throughout the feasibility stage.

17. Buckinghamshire were considered the best proposition for a number of reasons including:

    (a)   Geographical location, size and demographics.
    (b)   Relationship with key partners (e.g. Thames Valley Police).
    (c)   Political control.
    (d)   Higher tier authority in two tier governance system.
    (e)   Member of same formal regional working group. This will be especially important as the Landscape Review changes are implemented since the consultation proposes a stronger role for regional groups.
    (f)   Size of service and budget.
    (g)   Similar purpose, values, style of operation and standards.
    (h)   Complementary assets, specialisms and expertise.
    (i)   Management structure and autonomy of the service presents an opportunity to provide additional management capacity to Oxfordshire.
    (j)   Has challenging savings targets to meet and is open to collaborative working.

18. An options paper was presented to Cllr Heathcoat and senior managers, and their preferred option was to pursue a joint service with Buckinghamshire County Council, with Oxfordshire County Council hosting the joint service.

Options Explained

19. Work was completed as part of the feasibility study with Buckinghamshire to explore the benefits and costs of different shared service models.

Option 1- Commissioned Service

20. One authority contracts the provision of the service to the other, with all staff transferring across to the provider authority under the provisions of The Transfer of Undertakings (Protection of Employment) Regulations 2004.

Option 2- Shared/ Joint Service

21.   Both authorities pool resources and develop a common approach across the two counties for common service delivery areas. A shared service will involve one authority hosting the joint service on behalf of both Councils. There are some cashable savings, but many of the benefits are non cashable, such as increased senior management capacity (Buckinghamshire has two senior managers, Oxfordshire has one), in built resilience and a greater opportunity to make credible bids for external funding to tackle regional crime.

Option 3- Shared Management Team

22.   A shared management team providing additional capacity at a senior management level in both services. There would be no formal pooling of resources, but a more informal joint working arrangement. This model would provide some benefits for Oxfordshire, such as increasing senior management capacity. This approach could ultimately move towards a full shared service on an incremental basis.

23.   Any of the options above are scalable, so other local authorities could join at a later date if they wish.

Future saving requirements and likely impact on frontline service delivery

24.   The Medium-Term Financial Plan identifies savings to be achieved by the Trading Standards Service. The budget reduction required from an alternative approach to the provision of the service is £100k in 2013/14 and £200k per annum thereafter. This equates to a reduction of around between 4-6 staff depending on the skills profile and structure that the service maintains. One purpose of any joint working with another authority is to minimise the impact on service delivery of this budget reduction through achieving economies of scale.

Outline proposal for joint service

25.   The proposal to be considered by Cabinet is that Oxfordshire hosts a fully integrated shared service on behalf of both counties. To achieve some of the efficiencies that a joint service offers before a full joint service can be developed, it is also proposed that a Memorandum of Understanding based agreement is put in place from 1st April 2012 with a joint senior management team formed by the secondment of staff to the host authority.

26.   When all necessary advice has been taken and decisions made to ensure that the joint arrangement is lawful, properly constituted and meets the needs of both authorities, a formalised joint service would be implemented, with Buckinghamshire staff transferred to Oxfordshire County Council, and a formal agreement in place between the two authorities.

27.   The creation of a joint Governance Board is a key early step to ensure Members from both authorities maintain adequate control of any joint service. The options for any Governance arrangements are still being researched and the Cabinet paper in March 2012 will outline key criteria that Oxfordshire would need to achieve in this joint Governance arrangement.

Local Service Profile

28.   Both authorities agreed that maintaining a local profile and presence is important under any shared service arrangement, along with maintaining established local networks with key stakeholders and partners. There was also agreement that any shared service would have to be accountable to their respective members, and a robust governance structure would need to be put in place which provides accountability without creating additional bureaucracy. Whilst there are differences in the scope of the services between the two counties (for example, Oxfordshire enforces Heavy Goods Vehicle weight restrictions on roads whilst Buckinghamshire does not) there is no reason why these local variations could not remain in a joint service.

29.   There is a common acceptance that the issues such as local profile and accountability and the ability to vary the service to meet individual authority needs and priorities are important and a key factor in any future service design. But it was acknowledged that this will have an impact on options for savings. For example, additional savings may be realisable through co-location but such a change would result in reduced 'local' profile and is unlikely to be acceptable to both authorities.

Shared Aims and Performance Measures

30.   During discussions with Buckinghamshire a vision for a fully shared service was discussed and agreed. The aims, priorities and performance measures of both existing services were compared, and a draft set of joint measures produced which it is considered could work across both authorities. Implementing these shared purpose statements and performance measures (defining in broad terms the aim of the joint service, the service customers could expect and how performance could be measured) would not require any significant policy change or cultural change in either authority. It is therefore considered unlikely that consumers or businesses in Oxfordshire will receive any significantly different service as a result of creating a joint service with Buckinghamshire.

31.   Corporate values and priorities were also discussed, compared and mapped to ensure they were complementary and a shared service could work within the broader corporate framework.

Implementation

32.   Should Cabinet approve the creation of a joint service, it is likely that implementation will happen during 2012/13. As stated above, an interim measure of a formal joint working arrangement under a Memorandum of

Understanding will be implemented early in 2012. This will ensure that we can start to capitalise on the potential benefits of joint management arrangements whilst the necessary processes required for full integration takes place.

33. It is likely that any joint service development will progress through 3 phases. Start up and consolidation (during 2012/13 under a memorandum of understanding), improvement phase (late 2012/13 as a full joint service is created) and optimisation phase (2013 onwards).

Potential Benefits

34. The shared service proposals have been developed on the basis of the realistic benefits of collective provision and protection of resources for frontline service delivery and improvement. The sections below outline some of these potential benefits. Commonly, shared services projects in local Government deliver savings through shared management, thus reducing management overheads, and by merging back office support functions. There are also savings to be made by sharing equipment and through procurement opportunities.

Responding to the Changing National Context

35. The way Trading Standards Services are delivered will change significantly in the next few years. A government consultation on the consumer protection landscape has been published. This will create opportunities for new income streams and service capacity building. As a service we are likely to be able to deliver a better service in Oxfordshire if we can embrace the new ways of working and opportunities the Government led changes bring. Joint working arrangements with another County will increase our influence and capacity to exploit these new opportunities.

Senior Management Capacity

36. From April 2012 the Trading Standards Service will operate with a reduced senior manager capacity, having removed the Group Manager layer in the service structure. This change has been driven by the need to develop new ways of working and to ensure budget reductions are managed in such a way as to protect service delivery capacity where possible. By working closer with Buckinghamshire Trading Standards, either by a shared management team; or more formalised joint working, the number of senior managers will be increased to three across the two services. This will provide additional resilience and capacity for improvement.

Support Services

37. Across the two authorities there is a degree of duplication of process around support service functions such as purchasing, maintaining information resources, maintenance of assets and equipment, etc. Opportunities will be explored for integrating these processes in order to allow front-line officers to focus on service delivery and to exploit potential opportunities for efficiencies.

Learning and sharing best practice

38. Each service has their own lead specialist officers in key subject areas, and there is an opportunity to share their knowledge and expertise across both authorities, thus removing some duplication of roles. This would result in efficiencies that could be realised across the two services.

Benefits from sharing specialist resources

39. Oxfordshire already provides a specialist petroleum enforcement function on behalf of Buckinghamshire under contract. A shared service would formalise these existing arrangements, allowing officer specialisms to remain in some areas. Oxfordshire also has a specialised Intelligence Manager and a trained Financial Investigator. A shared service will allow both services to benefits from these skills, whilst sharing the costs.

Pooled budgets

40. By pooling budgets in areas such as food and safety sampling, and conducting sampling projects across both counties, both authorities could realise some savings by reducing the total amount spent in these areas.

Resilience

41. As each service reduces in size to meet its saving requirements, service resilience will be a concern. Through a shared service resilience can be supported through sharing skills, competencies and technical knowledge to ensure each service has access to the staff with the required skills in all areas and increased capability and flexibility to absorb peaks and troughs on service demand. It is unnecessary for each service to maintain a staffing structure with all potential skills requirements being met, since many of these could be shared across the two organisations. Through identifying a common skills base across the two services and reducing duplication, resilience can be assured.

Output improvements

42. Through a shared service, we will be able to improve the quality of services by redesigning and reorganising delivery methods. Efficiencies are likely to lead to a greater service delivery capacity across the two organisations equivalent to approximately 1 full time equivalent for Oxfordshire.

Training and development costs

43. There are opportunities for a shared service to maximise economies of scale efficiencies from a joint training and staff development programmes, therefore reducing costs overall.

Overview of Financial Cost/ Benefit Assessment

44.   Both services have been analysed and potential cashable and non cashable savings identified. However, a merged service will not save a significant amount of money and the possible financial savings alone are not considered to be sufficient to justify the creation of a joint service. Capitalising on the non-financial benefits is the main purpose of considering a joint service model.

Risks

45.   Key risks have been identified as follows-

HR issues arising from change

46.   As it has been proposed that Oxfordshire County Council hosts any shared service, staff from Buckinghamshire County Council will be transferred over as employees of Oxfordshire County Council. Staff are protected by TUPE (Transfer of Undertakings (Protection of Employment) Regulations 2006), so there is a potential risk of redundancy/restructure/early retirement liabilities associated with the additional staff, or the honouring of contractual terms or other legal obligations that are additional to Oxfordshire appointed staff, but protected under TUPE. The underpinning agreement for the joint service will need to ensure that Oxfordshire is indemnified from any potential financial risk arising from the arrangement. Full legal advice will be sought on this issue in order to achieve the required level of assurance for Oxfordshire.

Risk of losing a local identity

47.   Both authorities are committed to maintaining a local presence, and have agreed on this guiding principal from early discussions about a possible shared service.

Governance arrangements- risk of loss of control

48.   For a shared service, research into similar shared service arrangements suggests that a joint Governance board will be required to ensure Elected Members maintain an appropriate level of input and control in a shared service model. This Board would consist of Elected Members and senior officers from each authority and would have responsibility for agreeing the service's business plan, taking decisions on the joint service budget and receiving and challenging performance reports. Consideration will need to be given to how the role of the Scrutiny Committees from each authority can be built into the governance arrangements, and how the shared service can be held to account.

NAME: John Jackson
Director for Social and Community Services

Background papers: None

Contact Officer: Richard Webb. Acting Head of Trading Standards and
Community Safety

February 2012

ANNEX

Draft Shared Services Acceptance Criteria

The following criteria will be used to assist the evaluation of Trading Standards shared services opportunities.

1) The opportunity must either-
   a. Develop the service to enable it to provide better outcomes for consumers, communities and businesses in Oxfordshire without additional cost, or
   b. Mitigate the potential negative impact on outcomes likely to arise through meeting financial savings requirements, or
   c. Provide for greater resilience around critical areas of service delivery or governance.
2) The resulting service must provide for service delivery focused on identifying and tackling the most significant risks to consumers, communities and businesses.
3) The option must ensure Oxfordshire achieves value for its financial input and does not subsidise another authority.
4) The opportunity must assist the service to meet its objectives and the County Council to meet its priorities.
5) The opportunity must ensure acceptable levels of political accountability within Oxfordshire County Council.
6) The resulting service must provide for good customer service.
7) The opportunity must ensure that a local presence for the service remains in place and that local identity remains.
8) The cost of delivering the project must be met within existing resources, by way of dedicated additional funding or without adverse long-term impact of service delivery.
9) The opportunity will also be assessed for its capability to -
   a. Ensure robust management arrangements within Oxfordshire.
   b. Improve procurement opportunities and sharing of assets therefore reduced purchasing requirements.
   c. Ensure strong management of key risks such as health and safety.
   d. Provide for development and innovation projects.
   e. Reduce duplication of effort between the partners on issues such as training, maintaining expertise, etc.
   f. Introduce improved systems of work.
   g. Realise cashable savings through economies of scale.
   h. Ability to meet the requirements of OCC's governance structure.

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Division(s): ALL

SAFER AND STRONGER COMMUNITIES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – 13TH FEBRUARY 2012

Background

1. This information has been requested by the Safer and Stronger Communities Scrutiny Committee to clarify the current position regarding preparations for the new police and crime commissioner. In particular, it will outline the existing arrangements for setting up the new police and crime panel and how this will impact on the Oxfordshire Safer and Stronger Communities Scrutiny Committee.

2. The Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011 brings in new structural arrangements for policing and policing accountability, both nationally and locally. One of the principal changes will be the election of the police and crime commissioners, the first of which will take place in November 2012.

3. Other than through the ballot box by local people, police and crime commissioners (PCCs) will be held to account by a police and crime panel (PCP) which will be composed of locally elected councillors along with some lay members. The commissioner, in turn, is responsible for holding the chief constable to account.

4. The Government intends that arrangements for the PCP will be developed locally.

Role and functions of the PCP: what is the current situation?

5. The PCP is a scrutiny body. It exists to scrutinise the police and crime commissioner. It will not scrutinise the police force as this is the responsibility of the Commissioner. More specifically, PCCs will be responsible for:

    - securing an efficient and effective police force for their area
    - producing and consulting on a five year police and crime plan
    - holding the chief constable to account
    - publishing an annual report
    - setting the annual force budget and police precept
    - requiring the chief constable to prepare reports on police matters, on request

6. The Home Office is expected to produce regulations and guidance for PCCs around the conduct of these duties.

7. Recent guidance from the LGA and Centre for Public Scrutiny has been issued on how to set up a panel. It advises that these issues are agreed before any decisions are made on composition so that the role of the PCP influences its composition. Some of the key issues are:

    -   **What will be the local role of the panel** – will it be a minimal role of reactive scrutiny (meeting minimum statutory requirements) or proactive role in influencing change and enhancing public accountability?

    -   **How will the PCP relate to the PCC/ local community safety partners/ local Safer and Stronger communities scrutiny committees?**

    -   **Who will be on the PCP?** – it needs to be politically proportionate, as far as is practicable, across Thames Valley executive and non-executive members

    -   **Which authority will lead/ chair the PCP?**

    -   **How will the PCP be supported and resourced?**

8. The Home Office is providing some limited funding to the host authority to run the panel. This includes £38.3k per annum for providing scrutiny support and PCP member expenses (£920 per member). PCP members will not be paid an allowance. Support costs are likely to be higher depending on what the local role will be. Local authorities have the option of agreeing top-up funding arrangements if needed.

Local panel arrangements: how has the PCP developed in Thames Valley?

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9. There is a legal obligation to set up a Thames Valley PCP. The Home Office will impose arrangements if local agreement cannot be reached. The indicative deadline for councils having agreements in place is July 2012.

10. All 18 councils across the Thames Valley need to work together to agree panel membership and panel arrangements. The Home Office will require some notification of these in due course. There is a maximum number of 20 people on a PCP, which means one member from each of the 18 local authorities plus 2 independent members - it was designed with Thames Valley in mind. Once established, panel members will need to agree 'rules of procedure'.

11. The first Thames Valley-wide meeting was hosted by Buckinghamshire County Council on 13 January 2012. The aim of the meeting was to discuss which authorities are interested in hosting the panel and to share thoughts on how CSPs should engage with the PCC.

12. A letter has been sent by the Chief Executive of Buckinghamshire County Council to all Chief Executives across Thames Valley offering to host the PCP and requesting that any other interested authorities put themselves forward by 8 February 2012. This date is to ensure that there is clarity on who is interested in time for the first Thames Valley-wide Home Office engagement event which will be held on this day (more detail below).

13. Each authority has identified a lead officer who will be the main point of contact for formal decision-making regarding the joint Thames Valley CSP preparation for PCCs. For Oxfordshire County Council this will be Dave Etheridge (Chief Fire Officer, Head of Community Safety).

14. Each authority has nominated a lead officer to help develop a draft proposal for the remit and arrangements for the PCP. Dave Etheridge has initially taken on this role and will work closely with Kat Luddeke to ensure key messages are shared with the relevant committees (TO CHK?)

Looking ahead: where are the opportunities to influence?

15. The Home Office has organised a Thames Valley-wide engagement event on 8 February designed to inform local planning and preparations for the transition and provide an opportunity to learn about and consider the relationship between PCCs and partners. There will be a specific workshop on Scrutiny and this will be attended by Kat Luddecke at Oxfordshire County Council who supports the Safer and Stronger Communities Scrutiny Committee.

16. A Thames Valley-wide Task and Finish Group is being set up to start the process of articulating the added value that partnership working adds to addressing the community safety agenda. Carys Alty (Manager, Safer Communities Unit) has been nominated as the Oxfordshire County Council representative for this group.

17. The Oxfordshire Safer Communities Partnership (OSCP) Board will be developing a Business Plan to focus on engagement with the PCC from November 2012. This plan will ensure the newly elected commissioner will have a clear and concise picture of community safety structures and priorities (both local and county-wide) for Oxfordshire which is especially important given the PCC will need to develop a 5 year police and crime plan by April 2013.

18. Oxfordshire county Council will have a PCP member and consideration will need to be given to the relationship between the panel member and the Safer and Stronger Communities Scrutiny Committee.

Communications with Safer and Stronger Communities Scrutiny Committee

19. Dave Etheridge and Richard Webb have presented updates on the development of the PCC to the Safer and Stronger Communities Scrutiny Committee in October and December 2011. A further update will be provided once the official guidance from the Home Office has been published which is due April 2012.

Report by Dave Etheridge,
Chief Fire Officer and Head of Community Safety

Contact: Carys Alty, Manager, Safer Communities Unit 01865-815406

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