

To: City Executive Board and Council

**Date: 4th. April 2012 – City Executive Board
23rd. April 2012 - Council**

Report of: Finance and Performance Panel

**Title of Report: CORPORATE PLAN MEASURES AND TARGETS 2012 -
2016**

Summary and Recommendations

Purpose of report: To present comments from the Finance and Performance Panel on the proposed measures and targets within the Corporate Plan 2012 - 2016

Key decision? No

Scrutiny Lead Member: Councillor Seamons

Executive lead member: Councillor Price

Policy Framework:

Recommendations:

The Finance and Performance Panel has been requested to review targets by Council. This report will be sent to Council as written unless change is agreed by the Panel Chair.

Recommendations are reported alongside conclusions in the body of the report.

Introduction

1. The Finance and Performance Panel (Panel) have been asked by Council to review the measures and targets that appear in the Corporate Plan 2012 to 2017. The opinion of the Panel is included below.
2. Throughout the last year the Panel has also been looking at the targets and measures at "Service Level" and has had the opportunity to review the proposals for these for the coming year. A separate report will be sent to the Leader of the Council once conclusions have been reached.

Conclusions and Recommendations

Increase the number of apprenticeships, training places and jobs created through Council investment projects and other activities to over 900 by 2014/15.

3. Work and investment in this area provides real opportunities to boost the local economy and improve the outlook and opportunities for City residents. In particular the investment in apprenticeships both existing and newly funded has been agreed to "...help reduce youth unemployment and support local young people to get experience and qualification."
4. The Panel would like to see an adjustment in the measure and target to reflect the stated local ambition of the Council. It is accepted that apprenticeships in place that are not taken by City young people will take time to adjust but the ambition to work harder to attract and engage City young people should begin in earnest and apply to all newly created posts.

Recommendation 1

That the measure relating to the creation of jobs, training and apprenticeships is split into 2 – training and apprenticeships and jobs. That within these 2 the number provided is shown between those taken up by City residents and those coming from elsewhere.

That the target for apprenticeships being taken by City young people to read across the life of the plan as 50%/60%/70%

Increase the percentage of top 20 employers in the city who agree that the City Council is business-friendly.

5. It is not clear what this target is driving towards and more importantly how it could be successfully measured, defined or targeted.

Recommendation 2

To delete the corporate target relating to a business friendly Council.

Increase City Council spend with local businesses to 43% by 2015/16

6. This represents the direct spending by the Council with local employers and is therefore one important measure of our contribution to the local economy. The Panel wants to see a challenging target here but had little information to judge what would represent a stretch target.
7. It is understood that the total of all direct spend across revenue and capital is £55m deprived from invoices paid. The 2% increase proposed by 2015/2016 from the current year performance of 41% amounts to about £1.1m. This should be reconsidered.

Recommendation 3

To adjust the target set against the measure – “Increase City Council spend with local businesses” to 48% by 2015/2016.

Attract 500,000 visitors annually to the Oxford Tourist Information Centre and use variations on this figure to track peaks and troughs and their causes.

8. The Panel are unhappy with this target. The improvement looked for via tourism is economic with the drive to keep tourists in the City for longer and increase the amount they spend and contribute to the local economy. Counting the number of tourists does not represent a good measure and should be deleted.
9. Tourism is an important industry and one that the Council supports through investment in the DMO. The Panel would like to see this target replaced with an economic development target reflecting the value of tourism to the City. The suggestion from the Panel is that we consider the Business Plan targets within the DMO but other suggestions around bed occupancy and the number of nights spent in hotels may prove just as useful.

Recommendation 4

To delete the current tourism target and replace this now with a more appropriate target that reflects the significant economic development opportunities within tourism focusing on the benefit derived from the City's investment through direct spending and support for partnerships

Improve the percentage of Council tenants satisfied with our landlord services to 86% in 2014/15.

10. This is an important target, the Council is a significant landlord in the City and we must be ambitious for this service. No baseline data is presented and the survey for the current year is happening now with reporting in May. The Panel wants this target to reflect the ambition for upper quartile performance as soon as possible and certainly within 2 years.
11. The HRA Business Plan places tenant satisfaction currently at 84% which is higher than the target set and the Housemark data details top quartile performance at 88%.

Recommendation 5

That the target for tenant satisfaction is adjusted to guarantee upper quartile performance (88%) by 2013/2014. The ambition for 2012/2013 to be adjusted to above the 84% stated as achieved in the HRA Business Plan. Should the current survey place us close to 88%, for this target to

be amended to reflect the ambition of performance within the top 10 of social landlords.

Increase the number of individual HMOs subject to agreed license provisions to over 3,500 in 2014/15.

12. This target is disappointing showing a slowing of the increase in the agreed license target with the likelihood of completing the task years away.

Recommendation 6

To recast this target to achieve the first round of licensing within the life of this Corporate Plan.

Deliver a programme of new homes at Barton

13. The Panel agree with this target.

Ensure that the number of households in Oxford in temporary accommodation does not exceed 175.

14. This target does not match that detailed in the current draft Housing Strategy where it is currently no more than 130 households in temporary accommodation. The Panel heard that a significant rethink had happened on this target since the Council meeting and that targets were to be significantly reduced across the years in the Corporate Plan to 120/100/87/75 respectively. This is good news.

Recommendation 7

That the target in the Corporate Plan reflects those adjusted in the draft Housing Strategy.

Improve satisfaction with our neighbourhoods to 88% in 2014/15.

15. The ambition for this target has been reduced for 2 reasons:

- The council underachieved against the current target of 88% (result 86%).
- MORI's view is that Oxford, amongst 5 district councils, has residents whose perceptions are difficult to change.

16. The Panel want to see targets and measures in the Corporate Plan that:

- Measure the important things.
- Give reliable and meaningful results to provide for improvement.

17. The satisfaction with neighbourhood target is measured by questions in the Talkback survey conducted amongst the Council's Panel of residents which is recruited to be demographically balanced and then

refreshed every 2 years. Those responding from the Panel are then self selecting.

18. Satisfaction with neighbourhoods by definition is likely not only to differ amongst demographic groups but also amongst geographic groups. To use this measure meaningfully to improve we must understand the differing opinions across the neighbourhoods in our City.
19. The Panel was provided with data from the last Talkback survey for this measure that gave an analysis of opinions by Area (Area Forum grouping) and also the percentage representation of panel members by Areas against the percentage that responded for those Areas. This data was not clear and did little to tell the Council the neighbourhood issues that needed to be tackled to improve perception.
20. The Panel accepts that this is a difficult area to measure but would like to see thought given to complimentary exercises to improve on the usefulness of the results.
21. The Place survey in 2008/09 gave a result for Oxford of 83% satisfied and the Talkback survey last year a result of 87%. This shows a 4% improvement in less than 2 years. Whilst these 2 surveys use different methods (one is a weighted survey the other is not) officers reported that opinions were similar. This suggests to the Panel that the target of 91% might be too ambitious but 87% is too low.

Recommendation 8

That satisfaction with neighbourhoods is measured using the refreshed Talkback Panel and this is complemented with a focus group run yearly in each of the Area Forum areas.

That the target is adjusted to 88% for 2012/2013 and then up by 1% each year.

Recommendation 9

That the refresh of the Talkback Panel gives not only a demographic balance but also a geographic one.

Maintain the percentage of Oxford's population volunteering at 41%.

22. The Talkback Panel is currently used to measure against this target. This is likely to produce an unreliable result (asking volunteers if they volunteer). Officers could not suggest any alternative measurement methods that might prove to be more reliable and it was also clear that the usefulness of this measure within the corporate set is questionable. The Panel would like to see a change here.

Recommendation 10

That the measure is changes to "Increase the percentage of Oxford City Council staff volunteering to 35% in 14/15 and for this to be placed in the service measures.

Increase the percentage of adults participating in sport (as measured by the Annual Sport England Active People Survey).

23. The Panel would have liked to see this measure changed to include all activities rather than just sport. It is understood that this will give difficulties in terms of national comparison.
24. There is a measure in the Leisure and Parks Service Plan to increase participation at our leisure centres by target groups which is an important element within the council's regeneration agenda and will complement the existing target. This should be placed in the corporate set.

Recommendation 11

To place the measure "Increase participation at our leisure centres by target groups" in the Corporate set. To further define these target groups and ensure the increase is no less than 5% yearly for each.

Increase the number of young people attending our Holiday Activity programme to more than 1,200 in 2012/13.

25. This target is not ambitious enough currently and particularly so considering the new investment provided for youth service provision in the budget. In 2010/2011 the Council provided 1505 places in play schemes and it is not clear why at least this number cannot be achieved next year.
26. The Panel recognise that an efficiency saving was made against this budget but this should not reduce places. Proposals for the spending of the new investment in the budget were not available to the Panel so any additional focus here is unclear.

Recommendation 12

That the target relating to young people's holiday activities is changed now to read 1500 for 2012/2013 with the opportunity to review this upwards for the current year and future years once details of the new investment spending is available in May.

Reduce the City Council's carbon footprint by 3% (tonnes CO₂) each year.

27. The ambition of the Council is high in this area and we have made significant improvements. The Panel would like to keep this ambition high.

Recommendation 13

To increase the target reduction of CO₂ to 5% each year.

Reduce the amount of residual household waste collected per household per annum and sent to landfill to 440kg in 2014/15.

28. The ambition of the Council here is clear – to be the best in the country. This target needs to be more ambitious and also include the matching recycling target which currently appears at service level.

Recommendation 14

To change the target for residual household waste to 430 kilos in 2014/15 and include in the corporate set the “Household waste recycled and composted” measure with a target of 50% by 2013/2014.

Increase satisfaction with our street cleaning to 75% in 2014/15.

29. The Panel would like to see the current measurement of this target to be accompanied by a view from a range of area based focus groups. See comments for satisfaction with neighbourhoods target.

Recommendation 15

To complement the measurement of this street cleaning target with area based focus groups.

Carry out 730 enforcements as a result of environmental offences in 2012/13.

30. This measure seemed of little use in providing for improvement at a high level.

Recommendation 16

To remove this target from the corporate level to the service level.

Increase the percentage of customers satisfied at their first point of contact across all access channels (web, telephone, face to face) to 75%.

31. The Council has made a significant investment in Customer Services across all channels; it has been one of the flagship programmes of Council 2012. The Panel was disappointed to see a downward shift in our ambition as expressed through the number of people satisfied with the service.

32. When discussing the reasons for this downward shift with officers a number of things were clear:

- We don't have a complete understanding of top or very good performance. We know how the top 10 councils who use GovMetric perform (80 Councils in total use this method).

- We don't know or haven't considered how the other 250+ authorities in England perform or measure this performance.
- We don't know or haven't considered how other sectors providing similar customer service front ends perform and measure that performance.
- We don't know or haven't considered what the national benchmark across all sectors is.
- The use of GovMetric as a measurement tool is not working well currently and this has to improve for results to be meaningful.
- There are differences (some significant) between the results we have on satisfaction across the 2 channels measured.
- Averaging out or weighting results across all channels to produce 1 target will reduce the worth and meaning of both the target and the result.

33. There is a plan to consider this target more thoroughly during the coming year, more likely the first 6 months of the year.

34. The result we have for quarter 3 of the current year is 80.6% which officers have produced by weighting GovMetric results from face to face and telephone contact. To reduce this ambition down to 70% without a complete review is not acceptable to the Panel.

Recommendation 17

That the satisfaction target for Customer Services is split across the 3 channels of communication with the Council. For the planned review of performance in this field to happen now to provide Council with a complete understanding of the performance of the best, how we fit against this and what our targets should be to be able to perform at least alongside the best.

Until this happens the 2012/2013 target is set at 81% to match the quarter 3 result for 2011/2012.

Reduce the cost of delivering Council services per resident from £172 in 2011/12 to £162 in 2014/15.

35. The Panel agree with this target.

Deliver efficiency savings of £6m by 2011/12 and over £9, by 2014/15.

36. The Panel agree with this target.

Achieve IIP Gold by 2013/14.

37. The Panel agree with this target.

38. The Panel was disappointed not to see measures and targets for the 2 new investment areas produced at the corporate level. The significant investment the Council is making in educational attainment and services for young people are welcomed but must be targeted and

used to produce good outcomes. Heads of Service responsible for delivery in these areas have expressed to the Panel their desire to detail measures and targets and a set for educational attainment appear at service level.

Recommendation 18

That the target that appears at service level for educational attainment is reconsidered to reflect the work we are doing and placed at the Corporate Level.

Recommendation 19

That the Head of Housing and Communities is asked to provide a measure and target for the investment in youth services.

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List of background papers:

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