

Performance Management 2nd Quarter Monitoring Report 2004/5

Report of: Strategic Management Board

**Report Author: Claire Emmett
Performance Officer**

Lead Member: Cllr John Tanner

Scrutiny Committee responsibility: Finance

Key decision: No

SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This report aims to achieve two objectives. Firstly to determine the performance indicator framework and, secondly, to report performance to date on headline indicators.

Members are recommended to:

1. Agree the performance indicators for reporting to Executive Board
2. Accept exception-reporting as the approach to performance monitoring,

1. Clarification of Monitoring Process

The hierarchy of performance management indicators that are reported to the Scrutiny Committees should be those that are significant strategically and operationally. In this way councillors can scrutinise those that have the most impact upon the service. There are other indicators that are largely operational in nature and hence their monitoring should remain the responsibility of operational managers. In appendix A we have listed the significant indicators and in appendix B the operational indicators. Scrutiny Members are asked to comment on this separation and agree a list of headline indicators that are to be reported to future meetings. Executive Board are receiving the significant indicators and next quarter there will be additional headline 'local' indicators. Reporting by exception will include our successes and where we are not meeting targets.

Local Indicators

There has been some confusion about the term 'local indicators' and their role in monitoring performance. We are recommending that we use a definition for local performance indicators in Local Government, as those that are not determined by Central Government (the Audit Commission) but are those that individual local authorities consider important to measure their own priorities – these could be efficiency, effectiveness, customer satisfaction/response indicators or indicators determined by local people. Importantly, local indicators are determined by councillors and officers and must be important, measurable and not in an

overwhelming quantity. Finance Scrutiny has asked to receive a detailed report at their next meeting on a framework for indicators.

2 Quality of Life Measures

We are working with the Oxford Strategic Partnership (OSP) to develop a set of city level 'quality of life' measures, based on work by the Audit Commission. The OSP is a city forum established in 2003 with our major partners in the city, including the police, primary care trust and the universities. The measures are intended to promote debate and interest in local quality of life and sustainable development. They will reflect the 'liveability' of the area - the positive side of living, working or visiting Oxford – as well as the challenges facing the city. They will be published within and will inform the Community Strategy, being reviewed and updated next summer.

3. CorVu

The latest results for BVPIs that are monitored on a monthly or quarterly basis can be accessed on CorVu, the council's performance management database which is accessible via the intranet. In time, business and headline indicators will also be integrated into the system and will provide a more accurate picture of the state of the council's business activity. There have been several training sessions specifically for Councillors and feedback shows that it is very beneficial to those who attend. Further training sessions are scheduled for:

24th November	6 – 8pm in Plowman Room
Wednesday 8th December	6 – 8pm in Plowman Room
Thursday 13th January	2 – 4pm in Plowman Room
Wednesday 26th January	6 – 8pm in Plowman Room

Contact Alan Brown for further information (ext 2384)

4. Variance in performance (see appendices for detail)

Housing

At the end of September, 57.13% of the Council's housing stock was decent in accordance with the Government's Decent Homes Standard, the target for this financial year is to reach 61.7% and it is predicted that this will be achieved.

While a property is void, OBS carry out internal works to make the property decent. This avoids inconvenience to the tenants and ensures a higher tenancy acceptance rate. In some cases, voids do not meet decent homes standards overall as a consequence of these works because re-roofing, replacement windows or similar large-scale external works are required and these are carried out under specialist contracts. It is estimated that approximately 85% of voids meet the decent homes criteria upon completion.

Of the 190 voids shown below, 88 voids were in progress at OBS, 7 had just been received and were awaiting inspection and 5 had just been completed. All were classed as long term because major internal works to meet the decent homes standard were either being carried out, or due to be carried out, on them. 73 of the 88 were targeted for completion within 30 days and 15 had targets of 30+ days.

Voids

We are reporting the business indicators by exception. Void income lost will equate to over £350,000 for the six-month period. As of the 5th October reports show we have 190 voids;

115 of these are long term,

41 not to be let. Up for disposal

4 properties used for decant

3 routine voids

27 sheltered units empty

OBS and Housing Services are reviewing void policy.

Rent collection (BV66a)

Rent collection is improving within Housing Services. The rent team is proactively contacting those tenants that are in arrears outside normal working hours, evenings 5.30 – 8.30. The team is also planning a high profile advertising campaign to raise awareness of paying rent over the Christmas period. There is also innovative work around Housing Options Officers visiting with rent officers. This allows officers to discuss with tenants the possibility of losing their home due to rent arrears. This work is aimed at helping tenants deal with their arrears and hence reduce the incidences of eviction.

Evictions

Oxford City Council evicted 10 households from its secure tenancies in the last quarter. The total arrears of those evicted, not including court costs, is £26,136. Eviction is the last resort for the council and such action is not taken lightly. Rent officers investigate the household circumstances thoroughly and a senior manager has to sign off any eviction action. We are of course, continue to pursue evicted tenants for arrears.

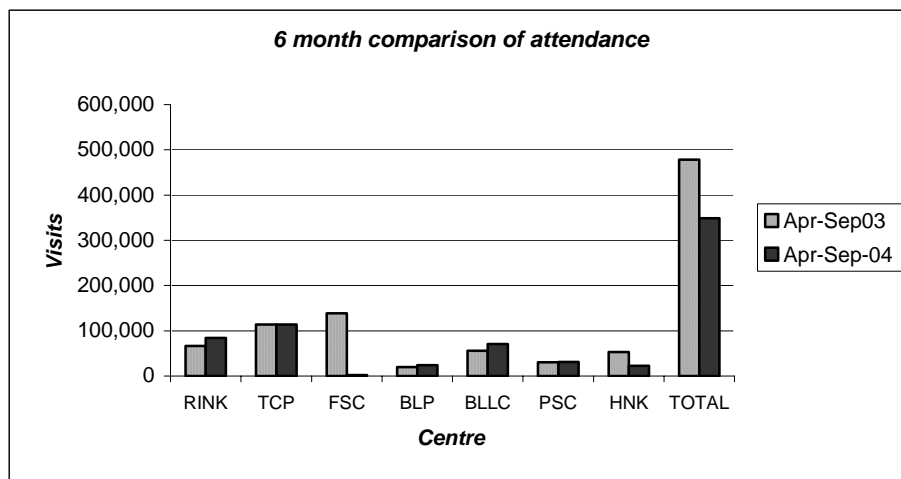
Environment

Planning (BV 109)

The Planning Control team has met all three of the Government's performance targets for processing planning applications this quarter. This represents a significant achievement especially for the Major applications category. There still remains room for improvements as the objective is to match other improvements in the quality of the service with this speed of decision making.

NB 'major' captures applications with more than 10 houses or sites over 0.5 ha, more than 1,000 sq m of commercial (offices, industry, retail) or other floor space or sites over 1 ha,

Leisure Centre attendance



The Ferry Sports Centre is closed for re-furbishment from April 04 to March 14th 2005. This effects the overall income and attendance figures for the sports centres and the slice card. Due to the weather being really poor this summer Hinksey Pools income is 35% down on last year with attendances down by 57%. The Ice Rink has done exceptionally well and will be looking at an increase in income from last year in the region of 38% with attendances up 27%. It is felt that this increase was due to a general trend in increased usage throughout this year and thus increased secondary spend, also high attendance is linked to poor weather. The other sport centres are all projected to be around target at end of year.

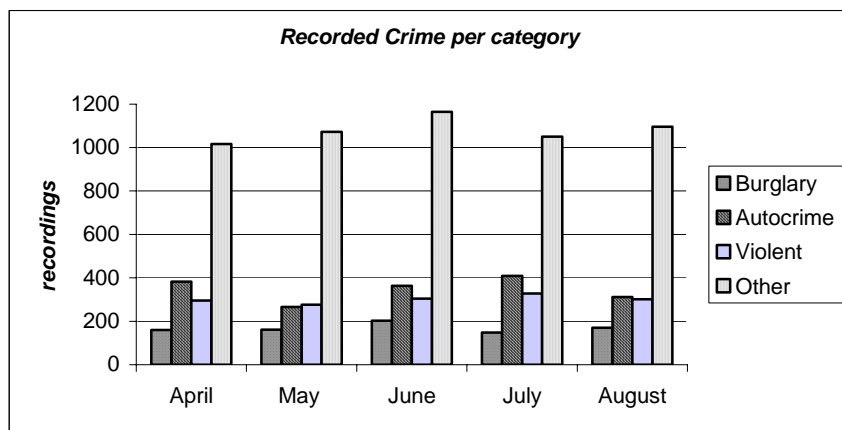
Community

Improvements towards the Council's Equality Standard rating (BV 002)

The Equalities Steering Group has been meeting monthly with representatives from four Business Units and has the Chief Executive chairing. An Action Plan has been produced and is updated on a monthly basis at the meetings. At present the group are redrafting an Equalities Policy and other documents that will support the statements. An Equalities Impact Assessment has been done for each business unit, identifying the necessary actions and any potential risks. By the year-end, we remain confident that corporately we will achieve level 1 and be advancing through level 2. The table below demonstrates the different Equalities levels as recognised by the Audit Commission.

Level 1	The authority has adopted a comprehensive equality policy including commitments to develop equality objectives and targets, to consultation and impact assessment, monitoring, audit and scrutiny.
Level 2	The authority has engaged in an impact and needs assessment, a consultation process and an equality action planning process for employment and service delivery
Level 3	The authority has completed the equality action planning process, set objectives and targets and established information and monitoring systems to assess progress
Level 4:	The authority has developed information and monitoring systems that enable it to assess progress towards achieving specific targets
Level 5	The authority has achieved targets, reviewed them and set new targets. The authority is seen as exemplary for its equality programme

Crime statistics



The Oxford Safer Community Partnership has four priority areas: burglary of people's homes, anti-social behaviour, car crime and violent crime. Figures show that we will not achieve predicted targets for reducing car crime, although car crime has fallen by 30% since 1998. To address this, two campaigns are commencing before Christmas, one specifically targeting car parks with people leaving items in their cars on display, the second is getting the public to report abandoned vehicles. The other area of concern is violence against the person as 40% of all violent crime occurs in the City Centre. The Nightsafe Project was launched on 16th October, which aims to reduce violent crime and binge drinking in the city centre. The crime BVPI quartiles do give adequate benchmarks. The Home Office have placed us in a 'family' of other similar authorities (such as Manchester, Nottingham, Bristol and Lincoln) and when compared with our family we are performing well and sit 3rd out of a total of 15 authorities.

Finance

Percentage of undisputed invoices paid within 30 days (BV 008)

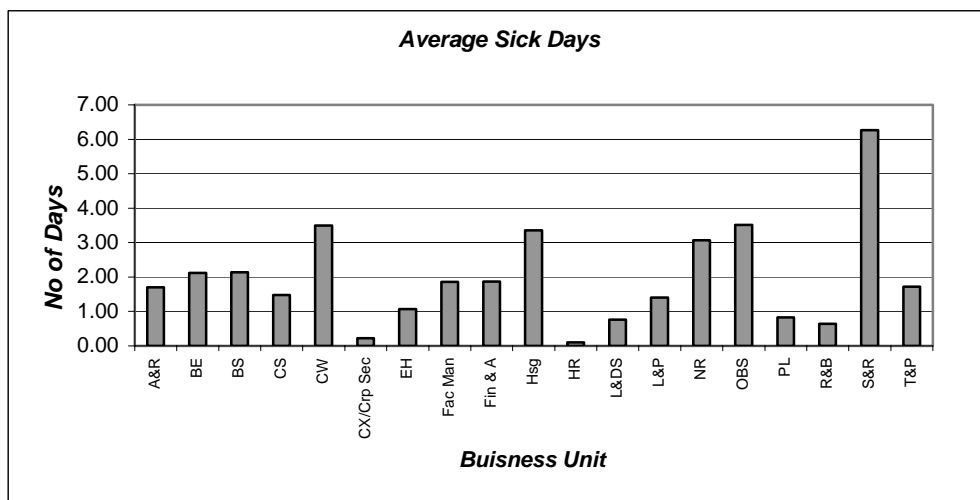
In August it was reported that corporately we were not going to reach our target with this indicator and that performance varied between business units. There have been a number of process amendments and support systems that have been introduced to encourage all staff to not only take responsibility for their own performance but also to be aware of the impact their performance will have corporately.

September has been the best month ever recorded with 94.25% of invoices being paid on time. This has increased our year to date result by 1.3 percentage points to 87.06%. If this trend continues by Christmas we would have pulled ourselves out of the lower quartile.

Sickness Absence

The corporate average figure is 2.45 days per f.t.e. employee which gives us a cumulative figure for quarters 1&2 of 4.83. This represents an improvement on last year (annual figure of 11.98) but does not put us on target for 8 days this year.

Human Resources will be launching some extra measures for the second half of the year over the next couple of weeks. These include new monitoring forms, increased early intervention by occupational health and an awareness raising campaign with staff.



Benefits

There has been good performance with average time to process new claims (BV 78a), dropping from 38.10 days to 28.96 days for the second quarter, giving a cumulative figure for the year as 33.62 days. Good performance also with average time for processing changes in circumstances (BV 78b) dropping from 15.3 days to 14.75 days for the second quarter. Recovery of overpaid benefit (BV 79b) has declined in performance from last quarter and is not currently on target.

Performance on BV 78a has improved dramatically over the last two years. The result for 2001/02 was 80 days and had only improved slightly to 77 days a year later. Last year showed a distinct improvement to 55.6 days and the improvement had continued into the current year with new claims currently being processed in under 34 days. BV 78b has similarly improved dramatically - from 40.7 days in 2002/03, to 28.3 days last year, and is now averaging out at under 15 days.

Council Tax (BV 009)

Whilst the second quarter shows a slight drop in performance we are still progressing well with a cumulative figure 55.37% even though we may not be reaching our target we are still performing better than the previous year. (see BVPI Quarterly Monitoring table)

Business Rates (BV 010)

Performance has declined slightly in the second quarter. The cumulative result shows 61.73%. We may not be reaching our target but we are performing better than the previous year. (see BVPI Quarterly Monitoring table)

5. Complaints

Following a complaints action meeting in July with representatives from each business unit, a complaints framework has been developed on CorVu, the Council's electronic performance management system. Every month CorVu will be used to capture the number of stage 1, 2 and 3 complaints within each business unit. Work is now in progress to identify an officer in each business unit to be responsible for updating and start the brief training sessions that will be required. It is anticipated to be using CorVu to capture complaints information from December.

6 Consultation and Communication group

Business units have produced a consultation plan outlining the consultation / communication activity (both internal and external) planned for this financial year

including any cost implications. Once any consultation work, such as the housing options consultation, has been completed there will then be reflection on how the knowledge gained will make an impact on service delivery, thus capturing the lessons learnt from all consultation, no matter how small. It will help to identify where the gaps are in consulting both internally and externally and ensure we are approaching this subject in a coordinating manner.

To ensure we communicate effectively with all staff, news, views and performance successes will be regularly highlighted in the staff newsletter 'Oxford Accents'

7. 2003/04 Year End Audit

The Performance Audit has been released and we have 5 BVPI's that will be qualified all due to systems failures; sickness absence, council tax, responsive non emergency repairs and time spent in Bed & Breakfast and Hostel type accommodation by families with children. However it was recognised by the Auditor that this last indicator will always be qualified as it is measuring periods spent in accommodation that occurred, not in the current year, but in a number of different years, and that it bears no relation to current performance, or indeed to performance at any given time. It will continue to reflect performance under a different set of policies and conditions in the past.

There were a large number of small calculation errors that the auditor focused on, 5 of which were due to calculating on an incorrect population figure, 2 involved changing the figures to two decimal places instead of one. When recalculating many were to our advantage for example Rent collection (BV66a) actually showed an improvement. Next year collection of data will need to involve a more rigorous quality check before handing over to the auditor and a more coordinated approach to giving the latest guidance to data officers.

The BVPP will be qualified this year as we did not meet the published deadline date (30th June 2004). This is unfortunate as the Auditor felt that we had justification for this due to being under external pressures (CPA, elections), however, their view was challenged in their quality assurance process. We have also been criticised for only publishing via the website and not producing hard copies.

8. Quartile positions

The Best Value Performance Indicators are still being considered using the latest data released from the Audit Commission, however this is now over two years old!). We are anticipating release on last year's (2003/04) quartile data to use for comparison in December. The third quarter will therefore highlight any changes in our quartile positions.

This report has been seen and approved by:

The Strategic Management Board

Portfolio Holder; [Cllr John Tanner]

Chief Executive; [Caroline Bull]

