

Report of: Environment Scrutiny Committee

To: Executive Board

Date: 18th December 2006

Item No:

Title of Report : Environment Scrutiny Committee Recommendations on Performance Management Issues



Summary and Recommendations



Purpose of report: To report the recommendations of Environment Scrutiny Committee following their discussions on the Council's 2nd quarter performance information.



Key decision: No

Portfolio Holder: Councillors Jean Fooks and Councillor Alan Armitage

Scrutiny Responsibility: Environment Scrutiny Committee



Ward(s) affected: All

Report Approved by: Councillor Sid Phelps, Chair Environment Scrutiny Committee, Sarah Fogden, Finance and Asset Management, Emma Griffiths, Legal Services.



Policy Framework:



Recommendation(s): The Executive Board is asked to respond to the Scrutiny Committee's recommendations:

1. If it agrees or disagrees with the recommendations outlined
2. If it agrees when will the recommendations be implemented and who will take the lead
3. If it disagrees why
4. If more information is required from other officers when that will be considered



1. Environment Scrutiny Committee Minutes

60. PERFORMANCE MONITORING

Comments and key points were raised as follows:

Recycling and composting rates

Quartile comparison to national trends requested

Local street and environmental cleanliness

Concern that the expected countywide audit of BV199a (% of streets dirty) by Encams, which the Committee had been told would be finished by January 2007, will not be completed until March 2007.

Flytipping

- looking for better enforcement
- Noted that potential prosecutions involved Council's legal officers and were taking some time. Strong evidence was required to bring a case forward.
- A cameras has been placed at Ambassador Avenue to monitor fly tipping incidents and collect evidence that could be used in prosecutions.

Energy usage and CO2 emissions

- Officers need to address seriousness of implications and Councils commitment to annual 3% reduction in greenhouse gas emissions. Need to plan for action over future years including necessary budgetary projections for the yearly reduction in emissions. Recommend that Executive Board ask officers to prepare a timetable to address the Council's stated commitment to reduce greenhouse gas emissions to be included in next quarterly monitoring figures.
- Strategic Director said that Climate Change Action Group was working to co-ordinate expertise across the Council. (Members input was welcome here with reference to knowledge of existing research models). Some difficulty in deciding on what were success measure. Efforts should be concentrated on actions that will achieve results..
- Noted that further consideration was being given to appointment of energy management officer. ESC would support this appointment.
- Noted that a trade waste scheme had been designed to encourage as many users as possible and that it was being extended from the Universities to the markets also. ESC support this.

City Centre Car Park Usage

Park and Ride figures did not give accurate impression of number of private vehicles driving through city centre. Suggested that statistics for traffic flow at strategic points of entry into the city such as Folly Bridge and Magdalen Bridge would give more accurate picture

Resolved:

1. To ask Strategy & Review Business Manager for future reports to present a quartile comparison with national trends.

2. *The Committee recommended to the **Executive Board**:*

a. EB considers the Committee's concern regarding the delay to the Encams audit of BV199a. The Committee deferred its Litter review until January 2007 partly because they were told that this information was to be available by then. The delay is very frustrating and members feel they should have been told earlier that the work would not have been completed until March 2007.

b. That EB ask officers to prepare an action plan and timetable to address the Council's stated commitment to reduce greenhouse gas emissions to be included in next quarterly monitoring figures and present this work to Environment Scrutiny Committee by February 2007.

2. Performance Information

- 2.1 Each quarter the Environment Scrutiny Committee considers performance information on a range of environment indicators. The Committee has made two recommendations to the Executive Board based on information received at its meeting on 27th November 2006.

3. Background - Encams Audit of BV199a

- 3.1 The Scrutiny Committee had originally decided to carry out a review into litter, vandalism and graffiti in the first half of 2006/07. The Committee was persuaded to defer this work by the Strategic Director (Physical Environment), partly because the Committee was assured that the issues they were concerned about were being tackled, but also because the audit of BV199 (% of streets dirty) was to be carried out by Encams. The audit would act as an independent check on the Council's performance in this area and would be a useful reference point for the scrutiny review.
- 3.2 The performance information report presented to the Committee in November 2006 contained an update on the Encams audit of BV199a. Members were informed that the work would not be completed until March 2007. The Committee have decided to make their disappointment on this issue known to the Executive Board and request that an explanation for the delay be given to Environment Scrutiny Committee as soon as possible.

4. Recommendation

- 4.1 The Environment Scrutiny Committee recommends that the Executive Board consider the Committee's concern regarding the delay to the Encams audit of BV199a. The Committee deferred its Litter review until January 2007 partly because they were told that this information was to be available by then. The delay is very frustrating and members feel they should have been told earlier that the work would not have been completed until March 2007.

5. Comments from the Strategic Director (Sharon Cosgrove)

5.1 When the Scrutiny Committee originally decided to carry out a review into litter and graffiti in the first half of 2006/07, the Strategic Director informed the Scrutiny Officer scoping the review that there were four surveys and studies that the Committee might find useful to inform their study, however they would not be available until the first quarter of 2007. These four studies were:

- The MORI public satisfaction poll of Oxford City Council residents which includes questions on satisfaction with street cleansing;
- The County LAA Cleaner Greener Group's research on public attitudes across the County to cleanliness and how to improve those perceptions;
- The County LAA Cleaner Greener Group's audit of how the five Oxfordshire Districts measure BV199a; and
- The KPMG Value for Money study on Oxford City Council's Street Cleansing Service.

5.2 The BV199 audit is a study proposed by the Countywide LAA Cleaner Greener Group, chaired by the Chief Executive of South Oxfordshire District Council. When this study was discussed at a previous Environment Scrutiny Committee, the Strategic Director had not given firm dates as the study is not within her control but she had hoped it would be completed early in the New Year.

5.3 The Chair of the LAA group appointed a company to undertake this work following interviews on 9 November; work is expected to start in December, a draft report completed by the end of January and the final presentation to the Cleaner Group at the end of February. The final report is expected to be published in March.

6. **Comments from the Portfolio Holder (Councillor Jean Fooks)**

6.1 The Portfolio Holder notes the Committees disappointment to the reporting dates for this study. Executive Board will want to note the good news that Oxford was audited last year by Encams with satisfactory results and since then the Council has improved its BV199a results with a jump from 29% of streets unacceptably dirty last year to only 14% this year. .

7. **Background – Reducing CO2 Emissions**

7.1 The performance information report presented to Environment Scrutiny Committee contains a section on energy use and CO2 emissions. The report to the Committee on 27th November 2006 stated that **“there is a lack of corporate drive to manage information on energy use / CO2 emissions effectively...there is nobody in house to take the lead and be responsible for energy management”**. The Environment Scrutiny Committee are concerned about this, especially in the light of Council's resolution to reduce greenhouse gas emissions across all services by 3% each year.

7.2 The Scrutiny Committee would like this issue addressed as soon as possible and so recommend that the Executive Board instruct officers to prepare a timetable to address the Council's commitment to a 3% reduction in greenhouse emissions year on year. This should be presented to Environment Scrutiny Committee in February 2007, with the quarterly performance report.

8. Recommendations

8.1 The Environment Scrutiny Committee recommends that Executive Board ask officers to prepare an action plan and timetable to address the Council's stated commitment to reduce greenhouse gas emissions to be included in next quarterly monitoring figures and present this work to Environment Scrutiny Committee by February 2007.

9. Comments from the Strategic Director (Michael Lawrence)

9.1 The Strategic Director (Housing, Health and Community) has made the following comments:

9.2 Officers need to continue to address these issues and consider the implications of the recent Council motion regarding an annual 3% reduction in greenhouse gas emissions. There has been some difficulty in deciding how to measure and model CO2 reductions.

10. Comments from the Portfolio Holder (Councillor Alan Armitage)

10.1 The Climate Change Action Team is committed to a 25% reduction in CO2 emissions by 2010, which is a more challenging target than the 3% p.a. reduction.

10.2 It is my view that we are not likely to achieve such targets without a full-time Energy Manager to make sure that energy efficiency improvements are made and maintained in all council-owned buildings. This has been proposed by the Lib Dem group in each of the last three budgets, but rejected by other groups. I am trying to ensure that such an outcome is not repeated in the current budget round. The scrutiny committee's support in this is welcomed.

Name and Contact Details of Report Author:

Andrew Davies, Scrutiny Officer, on behalf of the Environment Scrutiny Committee