



OXFORD CITY COUNCIL

PERFORMANCE IMPROVEMENT FRAMEWORK

2014 to 2018

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1 Executive Summary

Effective performance management is vital to delivery of the Council's priorities and vision and it is therefore essential that the Council's approach to performance management is robust, embedded and understood across the organisation.

Oxford is committed to delivering world class services and as such, recognises that its approach must be underpinned by transformational improvement. This framework was first developed in 2012 intentionally as a "Performance Improvement Framework" to reflect the Council's on-going transformational journey: its aspiration to provide services that deliver excellent value for money and recognising that to deliver our vision we need to constantly reflect on what and why we do what we do, rethink how we go about it and ensure our staff are clear about expectations and equipped to deliver them.

This new framework demonstrates how the Council uses an integrated and structured approach to managing and improving its services from corporate planning through to each staff member understanding how they contribute to the Council's corporate priorities, supported by personal development plans and our Values & Behaviours Framework. Using this cohesive approach the Council has achieved:

- real improvement in the way that services are delivered
- achieved several nationally recognised awards
- delivered the challenging savings needed to deliver the Medium Term Financial Strategy

The Performance Improvement Framework requires all services to have an embedded service improvement plan that is informed by benchmarking against "best in class" providers both within and outside the public sector, as well as using customer feedback to inform service improvements. This model has evolved to the stage where a number of our services are now able to tender for work with other public sector organisations, enabling the Council to spread its overhead costs and so improve our value for money and protect frontline services.

The framework continues to underpin the efficiencies and improvements embedded within the Corporate Plan and Medium Term Financial Strategy, as well as provide a methodology for identifying and delivering future service improvements and efficiencies in order that the Council can continue to deliver vital services beyond 2020 without any reliance on the Revenue Support Grant.

2 Vision

The Council's ambition, through working with local businesses, community organisations, the health and education sectors and the County Council, is to make Oxford a world-class city for all its citizens.

This vision is underpinned by the Council's 5 Corporate Plan priorities, set out below.

- A Vibrant, Sustainable Economy
- Meeting Housing Needs
- Strong, Active Communities
- A Cleaner, Greener Oxford
- An Efficient, Effective Council

Over the next 4 years the Council aspires to build over 900 new homes at Barton Park, plus an additional 200 new affordable homes across the city, complete the build of a new competition standard swimming pool and deliver a further £3.7 million in savings.

The regeneration of the city which will see a new Westgate shopping centre, railway station, refurbishment of our 4 tower blocks and the great estates programme that will benefit our residents in the future, making the city a great place to live, work and play. The Council is keen to leverage local investment to increase training and job opportunities and to that end encourages local businesses to apply for tender opportunities. The Council also requires all major suppliers and contractors to commit to paying the Oxford Living Wage.

The Council has a mandatory programme and project management methodology based on Prince2 which has been assessed as reflecting best practice. As a part of our methodology we have a gateway process that is mandatory for all capital projects. All project managers of capital projects and the key board members are being trained on the gateway process. All external project managers will also be trained and be required to follow this process.

Our project management methodology and capital gateway process can be found at <http://occweb/intranet/project-management>

3 Background

Oxford City Council is increasingly an efficient and effective organisation. Over the last three years the Council has achieved £6 million of efficiency savings and is on track to make a further £4.5 million in efficiencies by 2018/19.

In 2015/16 the Council will be continuing to invest in indirect property funds, reviewing staffing structures, and rationalising the use of office space. The savings target from these three areas is £1.3m a year.

Whilst the Council has been working to a corporately managed plan to deliver its savings targets it has also undergone a transformation of its culture with an emphasis on commitment to improved service delivery and customer service.

The previous framework set out a goal to work towards achieving recognised accreditations that supported our service delivery standards.

Notable achievements include:

- Best Achieving Council in the UK at the 2014 MJ Achievement Awards
- IIP Gold for the whole organisation in June 2014
- Customer Service Excellence accreditation for our contact centre and retained ISO:9002 for Corporate Property and Direct Services
- iESE – Working Together (Gold Award)
- IRRV – Excellence in Social Inclusion (Bronze Award)
- Excellence in Innovation (non IT) (Bronze Award)
- LGC – Shortlisted for Team of the Year
- Silver award for Council of the Year in the Improvement & Efficiency South East Annual Awards
- Awarded £1.5 million from Europe to progress our work to build a low-carbon economy

We have come a long way in delivering our agreed performance targets. In 2008 the Council achieved 49% of its performance targets. At the end of 2013/14 this had increased to 77% of corporate targets achieved or exceeded.

Project and Programme Management

Effective project & programme management is a critical aspect of the Performance Improvement Framework and ensures that our key projects are delivered on time, on budget and meet key objectives. The ability to consistently deliver projects successfully is a key measure of effectiveness and ensures the ultimate success of our corporate programmes that together deliver our five corporate priorities.

We have implemented and embedded a robust project management methodology based on PRINCE2 that forms an integral part of our Business Improvement Toolkit and we hold regular in-house training sessions to ensure that project managers are well-placed to deliver successful projects. We have recently further developed our toolkit to incorporate the more complex requirements of Contract Managers and Client Managers that are responsible for our capital projects. A newly-introduced training programme now includes the procurement for capital projects, contract management and a gateway review process.

We have also introduced a training module for Programme Managers that are responsible for our eight Corporate Programmes. Our Programme Management methodology is based on the government approved framework for Managing Successful Programmes (MSP) and ensures effective scrutiny and governance through a Corporate Board structure. As well as regular Programme Board monitoring arrangements, the Corporate Management Team regularly reviews individual programme progress reports.

A new project management application has just been implemented that will be used to manage corporate projects so that there is greater visibility of progress, monitoring of benefits realisation and compliance with the gateway process. It will also improve

reporting capabilities and reduce the administrative overhead in servicing Programme Boards.

Our current programme structure is available at:

<http://occweb/intranet/documents/corporate-programme-structure>

The delivery of our key corporate projects often relies on the successful appointment of a key supplier to deliver a part of the project. This can include construction partners through to new IT solutions. The Corporate Procurement Team supports these projects and provides an approved CIPs training programme on procurement and contract management.

4 Why Have A Performance Improvement Framework?

The aims of the performance framework are twofold:

1. To provide a coherent methodology within which to manage delivery of the Council's vision and aspiration
2. To enable a strategic focus on outcomes and the management of risk.

More specifically the benefits of having a Performance Improvement Framework are that we can:

- Focus on delivery of our priorities – understanding what we plan to do, the benefits of doing it, and manage the resources required to deliver.
- Assess whether we are successfully achieving our objectives, identifying and rectifying poor performance at an early stage, learning from past performance and so can improve for the future.
- Validate that we are providing value for money through comparing our performance within our own sector and beyond.
- Ensure we are listening to our customers and increasing satisfaction by putting our customers at the heart of service re-design and focusing on outcomes.
- Motivate staff by actively engaging them in service improvement planning, ensuring they know how they contribute to Council priorities and are supported to deliver them.
- Ensure that our improvement planning and delivery forms an integrated part of the whole of the Council's planning cycle.
- Enable accountability through transparent reporting of performance to our customers and the Executive.

- Demonstrate through the achievement of national external accreditations that we are committed to achieving performance standards that compare well with the “best in class”.
- Ensure that our policies and strategies are developed to support performance improvement.
- Deliver real and sustained service improvements.

By developing a more structured and holistic approach to managing, recording performance and benchmarking data, both qualitative and quantitative, the Council is better able to manage its resources and focus its improvement activity across all its services.

The environment in which we operate is becoming increasingly pressured, not only as a consequence of funding reductions but also as a consequence of increasing customer demand and raised expectations, increasing scrutiny and challenge as a result of the Transparency Agenda, as well as the implications of the Localism Bill.

Focusing on improving our service offer and our effectiveness in delivering those services is vital to protecting frontline delivery going forward. To that end, our programme of Fundamental Service Reviews that focused on a particular service area or function is now being augmented with the introduction of Corporate Efficiency Projects which adopt a cross-cutting, thematic approach to reviews. In 2014/15, we are reviewing our Business Support and Administration functions aimed at delivering a consistently high quality and resilient service across the Council.

Delivering VFM and putting customers at the heart of service design is central to improving service delivery.

The Improvement Framework is therefore intended to support:

- Accountability and decision making.
- Improved understanding of customer segmentation and demand.
- Improved business intelligence to inform planning and delivery modelling.
- Proactive challenge to VFM and performance management.
- The embedding of continuous improvement and benefits realisation.
- The creation of a more competitive, commercially-focused culture enabling us to offer the highest quality services on a par with private sector providers
- A holistic approach to service improvement encompassing risk and finance.

5 Principles of the Framework

5.1 Creating an Integrated Approach to Performance

The Improvement and Development Agency (IDeA) definition of performance management is:

‘Taking action in response to actual performances to make outcomes for users and the public better than they would otherwise be’.

Put simply, this is about:

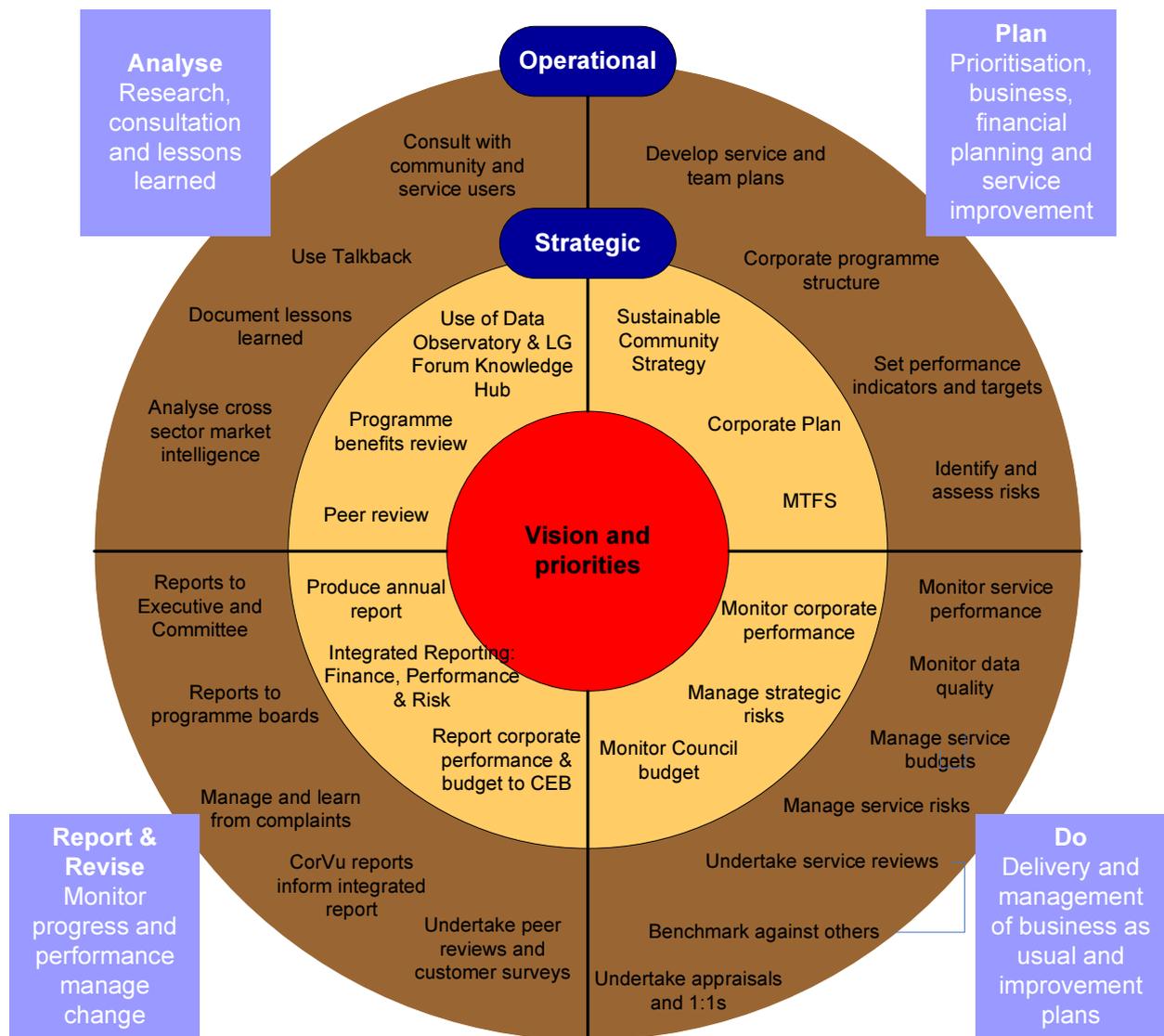
- a) knowing what outcomes we are trying to achieve based on resident feedback and stakeholder needs ,
- b) developing effective ways to deliver those outcomes,
- c) monitoring how well we are doing during the journey, and
- d) adjusting resources and learning to improve in the future.

In many authorities this has been developed into an established model known as “plan, do, review”. This approach, whilst well used, can result in an approach that focuses on processes without ensuring that the improvements deliver our strategic aims or how the cost of the service, processes and people can deliver the best possible service to the customer. The Council has for this reason chosen to create its own framework based on a balanced scorecard approach.

The Council is keen to incorporate recognised good practice into its own model and ensure there is structured analysis and learning back into the organisation as a whole. Hence the Council’s framework adopts an integrated approach that ensures that performance improvement feeds into service and financial planning and aligns it to the Corporate Plan priorities.

An annual review and refresh of corporate, service and financial plans is carried out, commencing in earnest each September and continuing through to February with the approval by Council of the annual Budget, Medium Term Financial Strategy and Corporate Plan. Service Plans and Individual Development Plans are subsequently signed off in March.

Ultimately the Performance Improvement Framework supports the delivery of the Corporate Plan targets. The diagram below sets out how the Council will use the framework in a practical context.



5.2 Embedding a Performance Improvement Culture

Personal responsibility for improvement

The Council has implemented a Values and Behaviours Framework which supports the embedding of a culture of continuous performance improvement;

- Taking Personal Responsibility
- Putting Customers & Communities First
- Embracing Innovation
- Valuing Diversity

and places ***excellent public service at the heart of everything we do***

These values encourage officers to:

- Engage with and actively support the Council in delivering its objectives and key performance measures which support the delivery of the Council's priorities and our One Council approach.
- Focus on customer service
- Take responsibility for their own performance and support colleagues across the Council in delivering shared objectives. Understand the impact of their role and behaviours on colleagues and the work of the Council.
- Feel empowered to offer ideas and suggestions for improvements within their own team or through the Corporate Innovation & Efficiency Board and know that these will be constructively considered.

This is underpinned through our appraisal system, 121s, team meetings, and active engagement of all staff in the development of annual service improvement plans.

In recognition that our people are our most valuable asset, we have introduced an annual Staff Awards Ceremony to celebrate the achievements of individuals and teams that have demonstrated exceptional commitment and gone the extra mile for our customers. The Awards are an opportunity for the Leadership Team to thank staff for their hard work and celebrate success in the journey from Good to Great.

The Organisational Development Strategy has delivered new initiatives that focus on developing performance improvement and supporting the Good to Great journey:

- **Appraisals**; the appraisal process and template have been designed and implemented to provide an effective way to performance manage and develop employees, enabling performance and behavioural development to be linked
- **Learning & Development Framework**; a document that defines and structures how we manage and deliver L&D across the organisation both at corporate and service level
- **Leadership & Management Development Framework**; a framework that provides a clear strategy for the continuing development of leaders and managers at different levels across the organisation. We are currently delivering a range of training modules for newly appointed managers
- **Talent Management Framework**; offers a clear structure to develop talent and many aspects of the framework are being delivered, such as work experience and apprenticeships, The way we develop our high potential employees is being currently being designed

Personal targets for improvement

Through the appraisal process all officers are required to develop their behaviours to reflect these values and are assessed against them. The ambition is for all officers to aim at delivering Great performance with Great behaviours. The appraisal methodology incorporates a moderation process to ensure that performance objectives are stretching yet realistic and also to develop a consistent approach to assessment. The rating system

now relies on only three criteria where 'good' performance is expected and 'great' performance desired. Anything less than a 'good' rating will attract a 'Needs Improvement' rating. These ratings are also provided against behavioural development to encourage both a 'what we deliver' and 'how we deliver it culture'.

Encouraging ideas and innovation

The Council's Innovation and Efficiency Board meets monthly to review new ideas for savings and improvements. The Board is made up of senior officers, innovation champions and Unison representatives. The Board has an annual budget of £50k available to fund "spend to save" improvements/initiatives put forward by staff members. Each service area has at least one Innovation Champion and a Unison Innovation Champion. The champions receive on-going support and training, including external speaker events to help them motivate their service areas. Events are arranged for this group two to three times a year. The group has facilitated a range of new ideas across the Council.

Since the Innovation Board was set up in April 2011, over 250 new ideas have been received and considered by the Board. Examples of ideas that have come to the Board and have been implemented are:

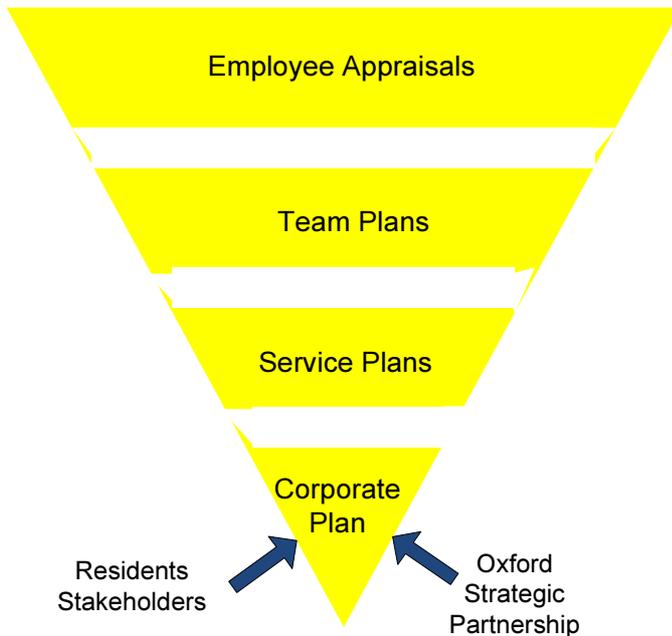
- Implementing Wi-Fi in St Aldates Chambers
- Leasing out roof space in Blackbird Leys for solar panels and using the money generated to fit solar panels to the rest of the housing stock, charging the tenant for electricity at a reduced rate.
- Using rechargeable batteries.
- Deploying foodwaste bins in all of the office kitchen and rest room areas.
- Introducing pool bikes for staff to reduce the need for catching buses or using cars to get around the city.
- Recycling scrap metal from repairs to Council houses.
- Using red fuel in fleet not used on the road.

The Council's Investors in People (IiP) Gold accreditation is testament to the Council's commitment to staff engagement, leadership and collaboration.

The Innovation Board has been extremely successful in encouraging our officers to put forward new ideas for improvement and is now considering the options to reinvigorate the initiative

Reinforcing delivery of Corporate Plan priorities

The diagram below shows the golden thread running from an individual's appraisal targets through to delivery of the Corporate Plan objectives and demonstrates the importance of individual employees in achieving the Corporate Plan objectives.



The increased use and visibility of performance, risk and finance data via CorVu has added a new dimension to the visibility and scrutiny of our performance reporting by officers and Councillors. All officers are trained and encouraged to use the system which defaults to the Council's corporate performance as the first screen on entering the system, so all staff have a very visible and holistic picture of how the Council is performing against its Corporate Plan objectives. Budget monitoring dashboards providing overviews of expenditure and drill-down capabilities for detailed transaction information are also available to cost centre managers using CorVu. These have recently been enhanced by the addition of committed expenditure from the Purchase 2 Pay system.

We have used CorVu to create an integrated approach to reporting performance, risk and finance to Councillors every quarter, with a summary of this information reported to CMT every month. This gives managers and Members a visual representation of all three areas against corporate and directorate performance, risk and finance.

5.3 Competitiveness and Commercial Awareness

Local authorities are tackling ever-increasing challenges with the public sector facing the most severe financial pressures for several decades combined with rising public expectations. Hence there is a growing need for innovation and commercial competence. Oxford City Council has embraced the challenge and to counter financial constraints is actively leveraging its expertise to generate increased income. This is governed and promoted through our Trading & Business Development Board, responsible

for identifying and pursuing opportunities to tender for work that we have the expertise to deliver to other organisations. During 2013/14, we generated £4.7m income from our trading activities and have a target to increase this to £5.7m in 2015/16.

In order to achieve its income target, the Council is developing its commercial acumen and gaining a greater understanding of potential markets through competitor analysis. We have commenced a training programme for staff to develop their commercial skills combining business and sales techniques.

Running in parallel, the procurement team is implementing a number of initiatives to develop commercial acumen including:

- Delivery of Chartered Institute of Procurement (CIPS) approved procurement training to 40 staff responsible for buying and / or managing our larger contracts
- Renegotiating major contracts in order to extract further efficiencies and better terms for the Council. (e.g. Midland HR)
- Learning from partner and industry best practice to keep pace with the latest procurement thinking and techniques
- Regularly communicating with local suppliers and industry bodies e.g. Chamber of Commerce, Federation of Small Businesses to ensure real time market knowledge

A new gateway review approach to managing the Council's Capital Programme has also been implemented. The gateway process has been tailored to the governance structure and budgetary controls of the Council and is aligned with common gateway approaches used by the Cabinet Office, the Local Government Association and the Housing & Communities Association. The new approach ensures robust governance and increased visibility of capital projects through their life cycle to ensure successful delivery.

6 Components of the Framework

Demonstrating that our services provide value for money and are of comparable quality and cost to those of other highly regarded organisations across both the public and private sectors needs an approach that is able to recognise the value of historic data, (benchmarking), market intelligence to understand the market and sectors that we operate within, as well as customer intelligence. The combination of all of this information should provide us with the information necessary to design future proof service delivery models.

The Oxford Improvement Model (OIM) comprises a range of components which, put together and used in a structured way by all of our services, enables the Council to demonstrate that every service is testing and reviewing how it delivers its services against others.

Details of how the OIM operates, the components that make up the framework together with the Council's approach to using them is provided below.

6.1 National Targets

The National Indicator Framework was abolished in early 2011. Despite a relaxation in the amount of performance information to be gathered, the Council has chosen to retain some of the previous BVPIs and National Indicators within Service Improvement Plans as they support the business in managing its performance, and assist in making comparisons with other local authorities continuing to use them.

6.2 Corporate Targets

The Council currently has twenty corporate performance targets which align to the Council's five key priorities and reflect the Council's ambitions for delivering the high quality services and improvements that meet our residents' needs. These key targets are reported on monthly and are available online via CorVu to all officers and members.

6.3 Service Targets

From 2014/15 each service area will identify between 3 and 6 key Service Performance Targets to form part of its Service Plan. These targets include a range of measures that provide an effective gauge of how the service area is performing. The measures include a mix of KPIs and service improvement objectives.

All service measures are captured and monitored in CorVu. The development of Service Targets is done annually by each Head of Service involving all staff to ensure that everyone has a full understanding of the direction of their own Service. The Service Targets are informed by; and inform the appraisal targets for all members of the team.

6.4 Team Targets

Although some services already use Team Targets to monitor performance at a more granular level, this is being expanded from 2014/15, with all services encouraged to include targets for all their teams. This will allow a wider range of measures to be monitored at an operational level while ensuring that key measures are monitored and reported at Service level.

6.5 Quality Performance Measures

Data Quality means the "fitness for purpose" of data, more specifically its accuracy, reliability, timeliness, validity, relevance and completeness. It isn't just about how accurate the data is, but how useful it is and how it is used.

The Council recognises that good data quality is an essential component of performance reporting and decision making. All corporate and service plan measures have a data quality procedure which is viewable via CorVu. The procedure is signed off by the Head of

Service and reviewed annually. A rolling programme of data quality audits is undertaken by the Business Improvement and Performance Team to ensure that the stated procedures and controls are in place and working effectively.

6.6 Benchmarking and Best Practice Forums

Benchmarking is a means of comparing how well services perform against their local government peers, or against similar bodies in other sectors.

The Council uses benchmarking as a tool to compare its current performance and approach to service delivery against that of others. It uses well established benchmarking bodies such as Association of Public Service Excellence (APSE), the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA) and the Institute of Revenues Rating and Valuation (IRRV), and family grouped informal benchmarking clubs within our own sector.

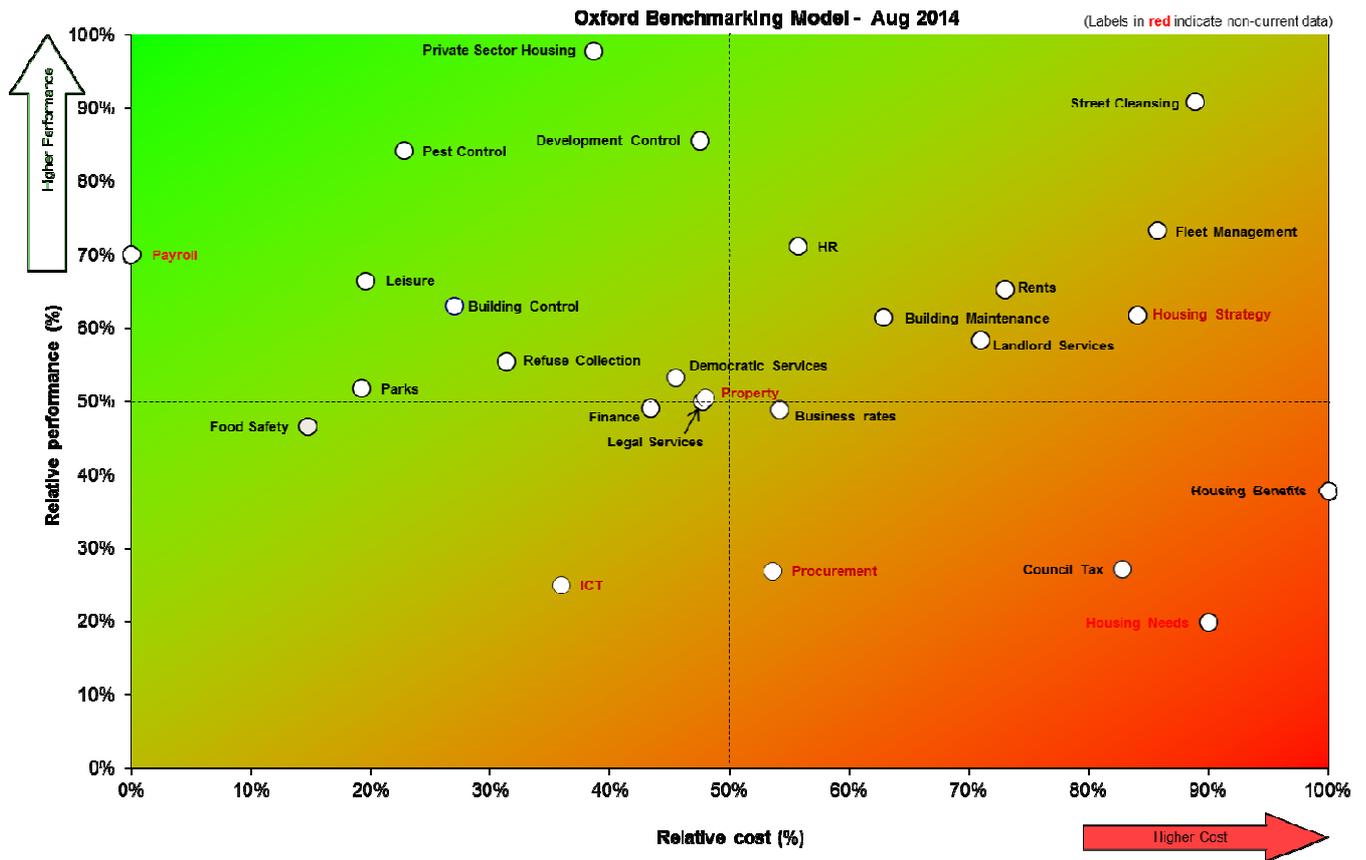
We recognise that there are inherent difficulties in benchmarking and at times it can be difficult and frustrating to fully understand the differences between the reported comparative data or to draw useful conclusions. However, it provides a useful starting point for identifying where service improvements and efficiencies might be made. A local toolkit for benchmarking has been produced and is available at; <http://occweb/intranet/oxford-benchmarking-toolkit>

There are also an increasing number of websites which provide service managers with the ability to complete a short survey on their service and then provide pointers on areas of improvement. These currently include the Improvement & Efficiency Social Enterprise (IESE) website www.iese.gov.uk, CIPFA www.cipfa.org.uk APSE www.apse.org.uk and the Improvement & Development Agency (IDeA) www.idea.gov.uk

The Business Improvement and Performance Team will proactively research new sites as part of their role in supporting all services and promote the use of these portals where there is evidence that these will add value.

Since 2011/12 all service areas have been required to carry out at least one benchmarking exercise within our own sector and where there is the potential to benchmark outside of the sector to seek to carry out a benchmarking exercise with that sector. This has proved challenging to achieve, and we currently have around 70% of service functions covered by at least one benchmarking exercise. We will continue to review service functions that can be benchmarked against other organisations and particularly those where there is also a private sector market. We will focus on joining established and reliable benchmarking clubs that have robust data quality arrangements in place and good analysis tools to help shape our service design.

All available benchmarking drawn from across the Council and from external data sources is brought together in the Oxford Benchmarking Model which provides a single overview of comparative performance and spend to help the Senior Management Team make informed decisions about areas for improvement.



6.7 Customer Feedback

There are many ways to integrate public involvement and performance management, including at the most basic level ensuring the latest survey results are taken into account in performance planning and decision making. A customer focused service improvement framework is essential if we are to deliver excellent customer service.

Through active listening and staying in touch with our residents, service users, and partners the Council can use this feedback to help shape the future delivery of our services.

Effective consultation also enables the Council to:

- Compare and challenge existing services
- Identify unmet needs
- Shape the way services are delivered to improve the customer experience
- Measure satisfaction
- Prioritise future spending
- Set service targets and service level agreements
- Identify quality improvements

Gathering, interpreting and responding to customer feedback is also critical to ensuring that the Council designs services that will provide the greatest opportunity for trading and achieving a competitive edge to realise ambitious income targets.

All of our services interact directly with customers both internal and external and it is essential that all services seek and use customer feedback to improve the service and shape its future design. The corporate Customer Contact Centre uses a range of feedback methods and solutions to better understand how our customers wish to contact us and assess the quality of our customer service.

All customers through each channel have the opportunity to provide instant feedback using a single click feedback system. This data is uploaded into a database comparing our results with similar service organisations. The system is simple to use, feedback is instant and the team are able to act on the feedback quickly. In addition the team listen to calls to ensure that the Customer Service Officers are able to answer calls correctly and fully to avoid repeat contact being required. The team have documented scripts which are continuously reviewed and where possible have automated many processes. A key objective, as the Council seeks to increase the number of services that our customers are able to access via the web, is to ensure that the same internal process is enabled for every customer channel.

The team were awarded Customer Service Excellence accreditation in 2013 and received reaccreditation as well as 'compliance plus' in 2014. The Council recognises the importance of listening and designing our services to meet our customer need and has appointed a project manager to roll out customer service excellence standards to other services with the longer term aim of achieving this accreditation for all of our main service areas.

In Autumn 2014 Oxford City Council changed its approach to gathering residents' satisfaction data. Since 2010/11 the Citizens' Talkback Panel has been called upon to provide this information, but the low response rate and unrepresentative sample is undermining the value of the results. In partnership with Ipsos MORI the Council now gathers resident satisfaction and feedback on community safety from randomly selected Oxford residents, using a methodology that will allow for comparison with other local authorities.

There is no 'one size fits all' approach to obtaining feedback. For example, some services may combine their feedback surveys to prevent consultation fatigue and ensure better returns. There may also be informal channels that are more appropriate to use than questionnaires, or through qualitative research with representative groups. The Council records and manages complaints and compliments (3Cs) through the documented workflow within the Council's CRM system, Lagan. The number of complaints and compliments plus our effectiveness in handling complaints is reported monthly at CMT.

The Council takes part in mystery shopping reviews which involve the use of trained evaluators to act as customers and objectively report back on their experience. This can provide useful feedback about a user's experience of their first point of contact. Where the Council carries out this type of activity the findings will be shared with staff and depending on the outcome developed into an improvement plan.

The Organisational Development and Corporate Services Directorate held a “speed dating” event in Spring 2014 with the managers of all services to encourage feedback on customer satisfaction and areas for improvement. The learning has resulted in the creation of a Corporate Customer Service Charter which sets out the standards that internal customers can expect from the support teams.

6.8 Cross Cutting Reviews

The first Performance Improvement Framework was used to identify and prioritise a series of Fundamental Service Reviews (FSR’s) and soft market testing to identify opportunities for improvement and offer best value to our customers at lowest cost. These reviews have been extremely successful in identifying improvements in the design of the service to deliver savings and efficiencies which have supported the delivery of our savings targets. These in-depth reviews of Leisure, Refuse & Recycling, Benefits, Homelessness, Rents & Revenues and Building Maintenance culminated in a range of improvement action plans and redesign of services which were then in most cases implemented.

Whilst the FSRs were designed to consider all aspects of a service in-depth, the Council has recognised that in all service areas there are many cross cutting, routine activities which are often carried out by officers at different levels and in different ways that also present an opportunity for increased efficiency and improved quality of service. This has resulted in the management team commissioning a cross cutting review of all business support processes to ensure that these are automated where feasible and all process activities are standardised to improve business resilience. This review will take place during 2014/15 and is being managed by a project board of Service Heads accountable for the delivery of the project outcomes.

A rolling programme of service reviews will continue alongside the cross cutting review to ensure that we continue to challenge service delivery at all levels and continue to improve.

6.9 The Oxford Improvement Model (OIM)

The Council is committed to ensuring any assessment of its performance provides internal, sector and cross sector context so as to demonstrate to our customers that we provide services that compare with the best in the marketplace. The model requires all services to have in place a number of improvement delivery targets within their Service Plans and carrying out benchmarking activities on a regular basis.

Customer satisfaction is one of the key quadrants of our model, and all services (frontline and support) must carry out either a survey or have in place arrangements to obtain customer feedback biannually. In addition, mystery shopping activities will be carried out on a periodic basis, these will be co-ordinated by the Communications team.

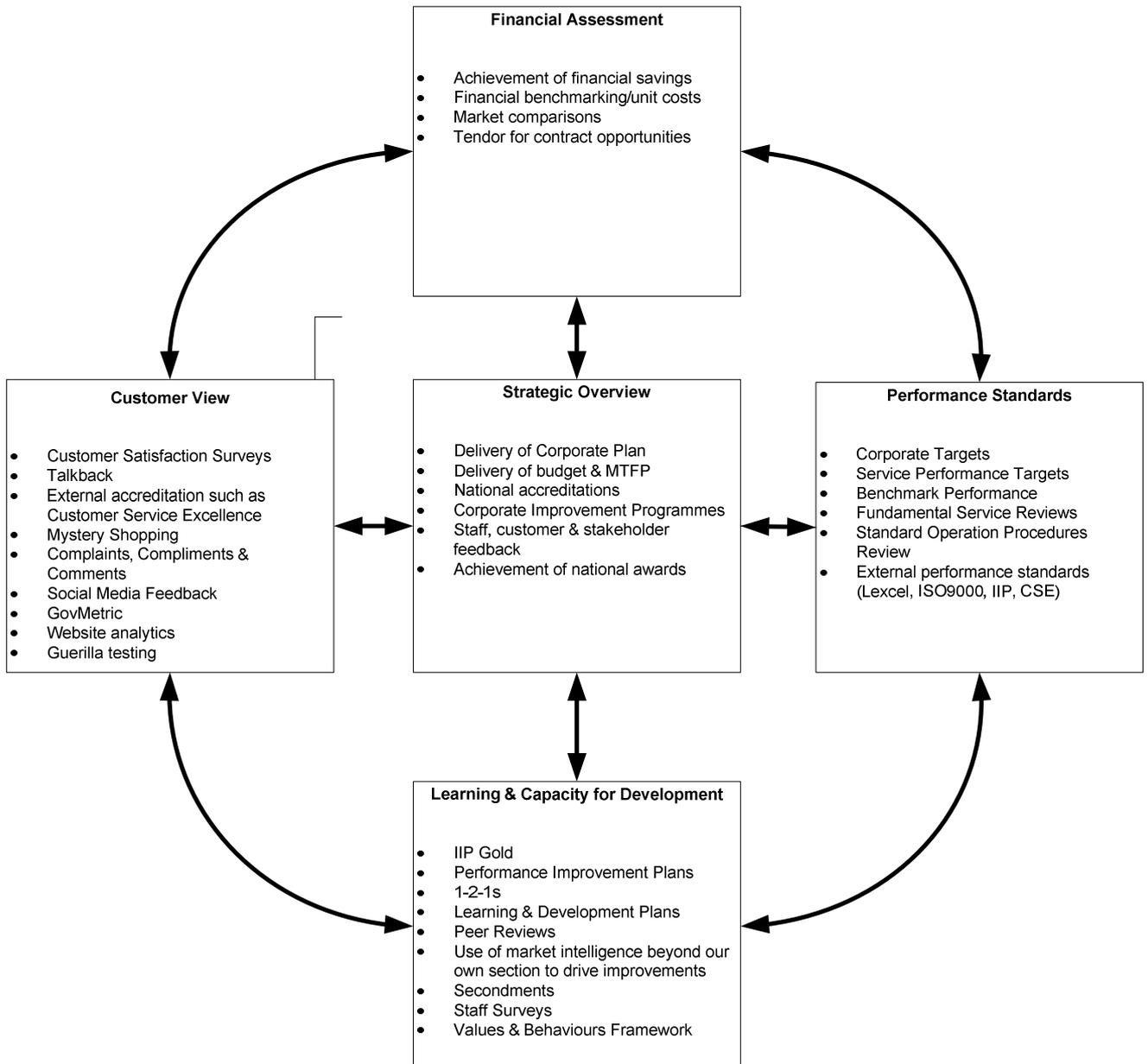
The model is based on a performance scorecard which encompasses;

- Customer service satisfaction
- People, process and systems
- Performance results

Size of budget/cost

The model provides a multi layered approach to assessing the current performance standard of each service. Within each of the 4 quadrants (based on a balanced scorecard) a number of factors are assessed to come up with an overall ranking for the service.

The Oxford Improvement Model:



7 Performance Reporting, Support and External Recognition

7.1 Recording Our Performance Journey- CorVu

The Council uses CorVu as its corporate performance reporting tool. This system has been set up as a single corporate database to provide all our corporate performance reporting requirements and provide on line, real time performance information to officers and members.

The recording and reporting of our performance data from this system enables the Council to utilise, share, track and report our performance journey.

CorVu has been developed to include;

- Performance data on Corporate, Service and Team level measures
- Corporate and service risk reporting
- Finance data (actual expenditure as well as commitments) for Corporate, Service and cost centre monitoring
- Strategy and action plan monitoring (e.g. Housing Strategy, Youth Ambition Programme)
- Tracking the implementation of actions arising from internal audit recommendations

Bespoke reports have also been developed for the City Executive Board (CEB), Scrutiny and Programme Boards

7.2 Role of the Corporate Services

The Council Corporate Services teams work together to support all frontline services. The focus for each team is to ensure that the work carried out behind the scenes offers the most effective and efficient corporate infrastructure whilst ensuring that the Council maintains robust corporate governance.

The new HR policies provide and new appraisal approach to ensure that every employee is assessed on their performance and behaviour and that there is regular opportunity for discussion, ideas and feedback. The Council's commitment to its most valuable asset now includes a Partnership payment scheme and wealth of employee benefits to aid staff retention and offer development and promotion prospects internally.

Our Customer Service team ensure that our standards are incorporated into their standards and all processes in providing excellent customer service and aim to deal with most enquiries within their service. This continues to drive efficiency savings by reducing the number of contacts and hand off between teams to complete a transaction. The team are the lead for improving our customer interaction standards across the Council.

Finance is the key to ensuring that our Medium Term Financial plan is delivered and ensuring that managers have the tools and skills to manage their budgets. The team's

implementation of Purchase to Pay (P2P) and better exploitation of the Council's corporate finance system has enabled improved information to support evidence based decisions.

Law and Governance continue to manage the Council's corporate governance and use their knowledge and skill to support other local public sector organisations. The team are committed to driving efficient processes throughout all their activities and their benchmarking data continuously shows that they provide the Council with low cost and good value services.

The Business Improvement and Technology team manage the Council's corporate change programme, have responsibility for ensuring the Council achieves value for money from its £55 million revenue supplier spend developing and exploit technology to deliver efficiencies.

The Procurement team also has responsibility for the procurement function at two other Councils and this offers the Councils increased supplier leverage. The Technology team has a work programme which is managed alongside the Business Improvement team to ensure that the technology is used to drive more efficient processes and service design.

Each team has a Business Partner that works with the frontline services and the Business Partners collaborate to ensure that projects are delivered and savings are realised.

7.3 Developing Internal Capacity

It is essential that this framework supports and embeds a performance culture that is part of the "day job".

The teams within Business Improvement and Technology have annual work plans that support the Council's improvement journey and these cut across the services and programme structures.

The team actively work alongside the internal teams and chair a number of specialist interest groups. The service group members are known as "champions" and are trained to provide a first point of contact in each service area. The champions' network includes Procurement, Innovation, Project Managers and specific ICT applications. The networks meet two or three times annually.

A list of all of the champions is available at: <http://occweb/intranet/staff-innovation-and-efficiency>

The team also recognise that the key to supporting improvements is to "be out there". Many authorities run Performance Clinics where officers can call in with specific queries. The Business Improvement Partners will work out in the service areas as part of their role. In addition the service managers will advertise specific dates each month when they and staff will not book meetings and hot desk within a service area and be available to deal with any Business Improvement related queries.

Beyond this, the Council aspires to bring the excellent learning from other authorities and organisations delivering similar services back into the Council. All staff will be encouraged to visit and network with other organisations to avoid the Council developing an inward

looking approach. Staff will be encouraged to use the LG Knowledge Hub and network and we will use all opportunities to share our learning with others.

The Council may wish to consider developing opportunities for shared learning through secondments.

7.4 External Recognition and Awards

External recognition of our achievements builds confidence in the organisation internally and externally. As part of its implementation of the Performance Improvement Framework, the Council is tracking those accreditations it has secured. These are listed below;

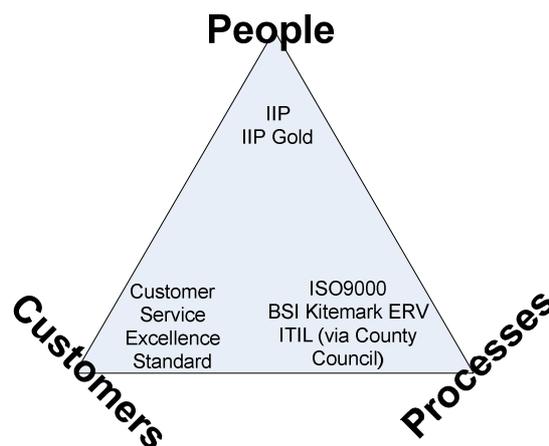
Corporate / Service Area	Areas of Service Covered	Accreditation	Date Accredited
Corporate	All Services	IIP Gold	July 2014
Corporate	All Services	Purple Flag	November 2011
Leisure, Parks & Communities Direct Services Property and Regeneration	All services	ISO9001:	March 2013
Direct Services and Leisure, Parks & Communities	All services	ISO14001	September 2012
Leisure, Parks & Communities	Leisure (Sports Development Team)	Quest Plus	September 2013
Leisure, Parks & Communities	Parks Service	Green Flag	July 2013
Leisure, Parks & Communities	Leisure (Sports Development Team)	Street mark	July 2014
Customer services	Whole Service	Customer Service Excellence	July 2013
Law and governance	Legal Services	LEXCEL	December 2013
Human Resources & Facilities	Payroll	CIPP Payroll Assurance Scheme	December 2012
Human Resources & Facilities	Payroll	PQP for Organisations	June 2011
Environmental Development	Dog Wardens	Stray Dogs Footprint Gold Award	September 2013

These awards provide the Council with validated external recognition of its high service delivery and operational standards for people, processes and customers.

A programme is in place to progress ISO and other Quality accreditation across service areas as appropriate with Human Resources and Environmental Development planning to progress ISO9001 during 2015/16. A revised iteration of ISO9001 has recently been released by the British Standards Institute (BSI) and other service areas currently accredited to the 2008 version will need to consider migration to the 2015 release by a deadline to be specified by the BSI.

The Council is keen to ensure that our officers are involved and developed in all aspects of planning and developing our services so that there is shared ownership and officers are able to maximise their contribution to delivering excellent services.

The IIPGold award recognises our commitment to people, and our Customer Service Excellence award recognises our commitment to proving service to the public. The Council has now completed a corporate project to ensure that all of our key processes are owned, documented, regularly reviewed and updated. Each key process is available via the Council's intranet to ensure that all staff have access to the processes and the Council has a consistent approach to key tasks.



People- IIPGold achieved in 2014,

Processes- ISO 9000 where best fits service delivery.
ITIL through the County Partnership
BSI Kitemark for Energy Reduction Verification

Customers -Institute of Customer Excellence

8 Conclusion

Managing our performance effectively is fundamental to the Councils' improvement and efficiency journey, facilitating the delivery of the Council's Corporate Plan and commitment to improving and streamlining the delivery of our services to meet our customers' needs both now and in the future. It is intended that through this framework, performance improvement activities will become embedded into everyone's way of working and a part of "the day job".

All performance improvement will be mapped and recorded via CorVu, savings delivered as a result of efficiency reviews will feed into each MTFS update and the improvement targets and activities will form a core part of annual Service Plans.

The framework thereby supports and demonstrates to our customers and external partners our commitment and delivery of our corporate priority, to be an efficient and effective Council and our ambition to provide world class services to everyone.

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Approved by:	Corporate Management team
Approval Date:	
Review Frequency:	Every 2 years
Next Review:	2 years from approval date
Related Documents Corporate Plan 2014-2017 Service Improvement Plans Medium term Financial Strategy Risk Management Strategy Corporate Programme Boards Digital Strategy Mobile Working Framework	