

RESPONSES TO RECOMMENDATIONS FOR Q1 PERFORMANCE REPORT

Additional commentary from Cllr Fry in red text

A. RECOMMENDATION 1

There should be clarification about which, if any, of the corporate performance indicators include data from Oxford Direct Services or Oxford City Housing Limited and the way in which these were used, particularly in reference to whether under measure BI001 (percentage of Council spend with local businesses) Oxford Direct Services is recorded as a recipient of Council spend, a contributor to Council spend or both?

Response from Caterina Abrusci

The figure BI001 records the Council spend with local business and this does include the spending with Oxford Direct Services.

Supplementary Question Submitted by Councillor James Fry

BI001 – Are Council Companies considered to be local businesses in these figures? If so, it would be good to know how much of this figure is represented by ODS and the Housing Company.

Response from Caterina Abrusci:

The total spend of the Council with local businesses for November 2019 is 73.18%. This figure includes ODS, ODSTL and OCHL. Taking out these clients, the total spend of Oxford City Council with local business is 31.37%.

Further response from Councillor James Fry

I recommend that we request separate targets (a) for all local businesses (including Council companies, as now) and (b) for other local businesses, i.e., a target higher than the 31.37% stated here for this group.

B. RECOMMENDATION 2

That the wording of measure ED002 (Implementation of measures to reduce the City Council's carbon footprint by 5% each year) should be reviewed and that information on the methodology for calculating the Council's anticipated carbon footprint be made available to members of the Scrutiny Committee.

Response from Paul Robinson

The carbon data we report, and measures we implement to reduce carbon under ED002, cover the estate and operational work of the main Council and

ODSL and OCHL (emissions associated with office, vehicle, and plant use in the main).

Recommendation: Change measure wording from

ED002 (Implementation of measures to reduce the City Council's carbon footprint by 5% each year)

to

ED002 (Implementation of measures calculated to reduce the City Council's carbon footprint by 5% each year below what it would otherwise have been).

On the further comments about the methodology, I think that the Procedure Note with reference to the latest Carbon Management Plan (CMP link is included within the Proc Note document) does fully explain the methodology employed.

However the existing CMP link is to a file on the M:\ drive, which Councillors may not be able to access. Access by Councillors could be ensured by changing the link to the version of the report on Council public website – which is available for anyone to view.....

https://www.oxford.gov.uk/downloads/download/552/carbon_management_strategy

With access to the CMP then the methodology used for ED002 is explained fully I think.

It is important to note that reporting on actual greenhouse gas emissions arising each year from Oxford City Council energy and fuel use from its estate and operations is reported annually, separately. This is done according to a statutory duty placed on the Council from central government since 2014. Reports on 17/18 and previous years can be found here...

https://www.oxford.gov.uk/info/20062/carbon_reduction_and_energy_saving/973/greenhouse_gas_ghg_emissions_report

Further response from Councillor James Fry

My view may be controversial, but a 2% premium seems a very low incentive to encourage more renewable power generation. Are we getting the return we are assuming in terms of generating extra supplies of renewable electricity from this payment?

C. RECOMMENDATION 3

That indicator LP220 (The number of people from the Council's target groups using its leisure facilities) be supplemented with two further measures: i) revenue vs previous periods, and ii) progress against maintenance targets.

Response from Lucy Cherry:

Measure LP220 (The number of people from the Council's target groups using its leisure facilities)

The organisation agreed for this to be retained as a corporate measure for the reporting period 2019/20. The Council has strong baseline data that supports visualising direction of travel (+ / -) and (where needed) to challenge improvement by Fusion. The measure should remain in 19/20.

Consideration could be given to place this as a Service Measure in 2020/21. However, this would be an organisational decision and should also consider and reflect wider contractual KPI requirements.

Progress against maintenance targets

A prudent output KPI and the Council would need to agree with Fusion how this could be measured and reported (self-reporting by Fusion).

The Agreement for the continuous development, management and operation of leisure services in Oxford could be reviewed to consider alternative opportunity for KPI amendment.

If there is desire to progress this approach this may require a contractual variation. As such, it would be prudent to consider any impact on the contract financial schedule.

Satisfaction elements do currently include building condition and cleanliness, which is already a helpful and industry wide KPI.

Further response from Councillor James Fry

Even if maintenance does not specifically come into the contract, it would be good to have some indication of progress made with maintenance, since the quality of service is a very important aspect of competition with rival gyms and swimming pools.

Could we not request, for example, rather like NHS waiting times, an indication of the waiting times for maintenance items flagged up for attention by the centres, i.e., x% of items waiting over 1 month; 3 months; 6 months; and over 12 months for attention?

Revenue vs previous periods

Under the principles of the contract revenue is a risk for Fusion, they also retain all revenue under the terms of the contract. It is an output based KPI and the Council should be encouraging measures for outcomes. This suggests there is no added value of having Revenue vs previous periods as a KPI.

Furthermore, a measure of this type would be public information and as such may breach the contract Commercial Sensitivity clause.

The current contract is very input versus output based. However as part of the work for Fusions 2020/21 Service Plan and through the Leisure Partnership Board, the Council could perhaps look to work with Fusion to agree more outcome based KPI's (at no additional cost to either partner).

Further response from Councillor James Fry

In view of the fairly recent experience where user numbers were reported as having soared while revenues changed little, due to a change in the measurement of numbers of users, it would be good to have an overall idea of revenue growth year-on-year vs. the growth in numbers, to give greater reassurance about the robustness and reliability of the user data.

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D. RECOMMENDATION 4

That measure CoS031 (Effective delivery of the capital programme) be changed to either i) disbursements, or ii) contractual commitments as a percentage of budgetary targets.

Response from Hagan Lewisman

We had recently discussed this measure in the service area managers meeting and we were potentially looking to discontinue this given that there is now a corporate PMO office in the Council monitoring projects. It does reflect milestones and I will follow this up.

Response from Nigel Kennedy:

To be clear the measure CoS031 is just in relation to Community Services and is not a target for the corporate capital programme. In this respect Hagan's response to the original recommendation is accurate in that the PMO will be picking this up.

If Cllr Fry is referring to the Corporate measure agreed by the Finance Panel of 80% of original Capital Budget to be spent. This is reported quarterly to the Cabinet and Finance Panel.

Further response from Councillor James Fry

Given the priority attached to getting realistic estimates of capital spending within the Budget, to avoid large "positive variance" from delayed projects, I suggest that performance against the 80% corporate measure mentioned by Nigel is also included in the Quarterly Performance Report to ensure that it is known by the Scrutiny Committee.

E. RECOMMENDATION 5

That in light of the challenges facing the Welfare Reform team, WR001 (Number of people moved into work by the Welfare Reform Programme) is no longer realistic and that a revised target be agreed.

Response from Paul Wilding

Recommendation: To reduce the WR001 target by 25% to reflect the reduction in staffing.

F. RECOMMENDATION 6

That in light of the growth of Universal Credit and the increasing influence factors external to the Council have on the delivery of this criterion that Cabinet considers whether indicator CS054 (Time taken to determine DHP applications) remains fit for purpose

Response from Paul Wilding

Recommendation: To leave the CS054 target as it is for the remainder of the year, but to use the narrative to the measure to show the different assessment times for Universal Credit cases and Housing Benefit cases. I would propose to change this measure for next year, effectively splitting it in two.

Supplementary Question Submitted by Councillor James Fry

I can understand Paul's comment, but was going to ask whether we face any penalties for moving above 10 days, other than having more worried applicants? Since this is a non-Statutory duty (as far as I know), I imagine that there is no penalty.

Response from Paul Wilding:

There are no penalties applied for going over 10 days

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