

Scrutiny Performance Monitoring – Written Responses to Questions from Finance and Performance Panel 06 September 2023

Measure	Name	Owner	Question	Response
BI038	Percentage of staff turnover for the whole organisation	Helen Bishop	What was the target for the end of 2022/23?	There was no target for staff turnover in 2022/23 and there has never been a target.
			Can commentary be provided on the reason for the increase in percentage staff turnover; and what was the target for Q1 2023/24?	<p>There is no target for staff turnover for 2023/24.</p> <p>The turnover reported at the end of March 2023 and at quarter 1 for 2023/24 are both calculated using the average of turnover for the previous 12 months.</p> <p>The difference between annual turnover rates of 7.31% and 8.72% is circa 10 more leavers in a 12-month period for a workforce of circa 800 people. This is not significant.</p> <p>To provide context, according to the LGA Workforce survey for 2021/22 the median vacancy rate in local government was 14.0%. This suggests the turnover rate for the Council is not high. Hence turnover is reported at the moment as part of a suite of workforce management information and not with an associated target.</p>

CH001	Days lost to sickness	Gail Malkin	Is there a sense that staff take less sick days as a result of working remotely and not necessarily taking a day off?	The sickness target for 2022/23 was also 6.5 days/FTE - this has not changed in 2023/24.
			What is the rationale behind changing the target from 7.15 days to 6.5 days for 2023/24?	<p>Sickness absence is closely monitored and managed across the organisation. In the last 12 months, regular updates have gone to the Corporate Management Team (CMT) showing sickness absence for each service area. Those areas forecasting levels above 6.5 days are examined in more detail to understand causes and actions being taken to address.</p> <p>In areas where absence is higher there is closer monitoring by managers using a range of mitigations to help colleagues stay in work, often supported by a formal case review process every few months where the service head and line manager review relevant cases. A script is also in use in parts of the business to guide managers in taking calls from colleagues calling in sick.</p> <p>The management information has not shown any indication that there are less sick days as a result of people working remotely and not</p>

				<p>necessarily taking a day off.</p> <p>The management data does show so far in 2023/24, that compared to 31.10.22 the percentage of sickness that is attributed to short-term absence has reduced, which is positive.</p> <p>Alongside service area activity, there is also an organisation-wide action plan designed to build a resilient and robust leadership approach in managing absence. Actions include: support to ensure staff and managers understand the role and service offer of both our occupational health and employee assistance providers; regular communications via in-house all staff emails, Let's Talk and Leadership Conversation sessions; the Wellbeing at Work Week in May 2023; a focus on performance management in our Leadership programme; and a robust governance and monitoring framework for absence in the organisation.</p>
CS003	Customers calls answered on the council's main	Mark Chandler	Is the very high call volume cited in the commentary expected to change with the Council moving to more digital	In relation to the Council moving to more digital methods of communication there are a few

	telephone service lines without hanging up		methods of communicating with residents?	<p>projects underway which should deliver this. A portal should be implemented in the next quarter on the QL system which will allow tenants to book repairs on-line and view rent statements/ balances. Currently tenants have to phone the Contact Centre to book repairs so this has the potential to reduce call demand. However, the portal is initially being rolled out as a pilot to just Tenant Ambassadors and any staff who are tenants and initially will only allow a select criteria of repairs categories to be booked, so benefits are likely to be phased over the next 12 months or so. Another enhancement is that through the Civica portal, where Revenues and Benefits forms are being added to allow customers to engage with us on-line, all forms should be available to use by the end of September 2023 and a communications campaign will be launched in October 2023 to promote them. This should deliver some reduction in call demand for the Contact Centre.</p>
			How long were the two posts which were vacant due to maternity leave vacant for before agreement was sought from Finance to recruit to these	In relation to the vacant posts, we were delayed 6 weeks before we had an agreement from Finance to advertise against them. This did

			posts, which the commentary suggests were much-needed?	have a significant impact as typically it takes around 2 months to recruit and train officers to start taking calls in the Contact Centre and whilst we have now recruited against them they have only just started and have not been available to help through the summer months when staff holiday absence has been at its highest. Finance were concerned that we had a significant forecast overspend so we had to make a case for why we needed the posts and how we could try to make some savings. The majority of the forecast overspend we could not affect as it related to savings built into the budget which were unlikely to be realised, maternity cover for which there is no budget and turnover savings which we struggled to realise as our turnover had reduced.
BI001a	The Percentage of Council spend with local business (excluding ODS and OCHL)	Annette Osborne	Why does this metric exclude spend with ODS and OCHL, given it means the money is spent locally to benefit the local economy?	ODS and OCHL figures are reported separately and therefore removed from the OCC figures to ensure this is not duplicated. If Scrutiny wish the Council to report on its total spend with local businesses to include all entities this can be arranged. Whilst OCC give money to ODS it does not mean that all of that money is spent locally.

			The result for Q1 2023/24 (32.61%) has decreased from the end of year 2022/23 result (39.5%) – why is this?	This is an annual target and the figures change monthly, which alters the average over the year. The average for Q1 2022/23 was 33.45%; with the average for Q1 2023/24 being 32.61%. In July 2023 the figure rose to 45.08%, bringing the average up to 35.73%.
BI001b	The Percentage of ODS spend with local business	Nicky Atkin	Why has the target been reduced to 55% for 2023/24 given performance last year (65.12%)?	After reviewing its data, ODS agreed the lower target of 55% for this measure as it is more in line with historic performance – therefore a more realistic target.
			Can a commentary be provided on why there has been a fairly significant reduction in performance from the end of 2022/23 to Q1 2023/24?	This reduction is because ODS' temporary agency staff provider was bought out by a company which is based in the Midlands.
BI001c	The Percentage of OCHL spend with local business	Annette Osborne	Can the commentary be clarified/explained? The result for end of year 2022/23 and Q1 2023/24 is 75.41% - exceeding the stated target; but the commentary states that the year-end average is 12%, which seems to be at odds with the results reported.	Apologies, it looks as though the figure input was for ODS not OCHL. The end of 2022/23 year figure for OCHL for local spend was 12% and it is tracking at 5.18% for 2023/24. This is a yearly target as the OCHL figure significantly varies due to the size of Construction projects.
CS002	Time to process changes in circumstances	Laura Bessell	Which migration are the delays due to?	The Revenues and Benefit Service moved computer systems from Capita to Civica and this had an impact of the level of work that the

				team had to resolve since migration. The team is currently at a year-to-date speed of processing of 21 days.
			What does 'SOP' mean?	Speed of processing (a new claim or a change in circumstances).
			Is the Council expected to meet the target by the end of Q2 2023/24?	No, this is not expected to be within the targets until the end of the 2023/24 financial year. We are currently tracking at an August Speed of Processing of 16 days which is a day over the target. Our performance in Q2 is showing a significant reduction in the year-to-date figure going forwards.
CS005	Time to process new benefits claims	Laura Bessell	Is the Council expected to meet the target by the end of Q2 2023/24?	No, this is not expected to be within the targets until the end of the financial year. We are currently tracking at an August Speed of Processing of 17 days which is 2 days over the target. We are currently at a year-to-date speed of processing of 20 days. Our performance in Q2 is showing a significant reduction in the Year-to-date figure going forwards.
FN008	Investment return above base rate	Bill Lewis	What is the outlook for this measure in the short, medium and long term; and do the Council's investments continue to be the most appropriate in the current climate?	It is intended that this will stay as a measure going forwards. This measure will tend to overachieve as interest rates go down and underachieve when interest rates are rising due to many of the

				<p>investments being fixed term. It is still useful, however to have a KPI against which to measure investment performance.</p> <p>The Council invests in a range of counterparties in order to spread the investment risk. The number of counterparties available that fit within our risk appetite is relatively small so there is limited scope to vary the counterparties used. The credit rating and risk of using each counterparty is updated in real time so if there is a change in counterparty risk rating, this will immediately affect investment decisions; this is in line with the Treasury Management Strategy and therefore takes into account financial market changes.</p>
FN052	Percentage of Council spend with SME's	Annette Osborne	Can the commentary be clarified/explained, as it is difficult to follow?	<p>The Q1 average for OCC spend with SMEs excluding ODS and OCHL 2023/24 is 70.15%; above the target of 45% - this is a yearly target due to fluctuations. This is the figure that should be reported, but officers believe the figure 26.68% was input instead which is the spend with SMEs including payments the</p>

				Council makes to ODS and OCHL, neither of which are classed as an SME.
FSC019a	Total income collection as % of plan (Council Tax)	Nigel Kennedy	The Council slightly exceeded the target (by 0.44%) for Q1 2023/24; it is surprising that income collection is not less considering the current financial climate. Can any explanation be provided as to why this is the case?	We have started to return to court processing in Council Tax which was suspended during the time of COVID-19 and system migration. The increase in cases which have been summons has now increased the collection.
FSC019b	Total income collection as % of plan (Business Rates)	Nigel Kennedy	What is the reasoning behind Business Rates being down by 3%?	We have experienced an increase in levels of work to be completed. We have also had some changes in our working practise to Universities and Schools. This has affected our collection in Q1; these payments have now received in Q3.
FSC020	Discretionary funding won by the Council	Anna Winship, Nigel Kennedy	Is there any discretionary funding expected or in the pipeline?	The Council has now received notifications of £2.426m of funding to date.
REC002	Number of Oxford Living Wage employers and employees	Carolyn Ploszynski	Why was no result supplied for the end of 2022/23?	120 at March 2023 145 at September 2023 These figures relate to the number of Oxford Living Wage employers only (see rationale in below response).
			What is the reasoning behind this KPI being under review?	The reason this KPI was being reviewed is that the Council does not have data on employees (only employers) currently and so officers

				<p>were exploring various ways to provide a proxy measure for the number of employees, but as this varies from each individual employee and the Council doesn't currently capture that data for them individually, it is not feasible to provide exact figures at this stage for number of employees as well as employers.</p> <p>It is suggested that this KPI be adjusted to reflect only the number of Oxford Living Wage employers, as this is the data that is held by the Council.</p>
PSC002	Provide a quarterly update on the five year housing delivery supply	Rachel Williams	Why was no data provided for Q1 2023/24?	<p>This measure is reported annually in the Council's Authority Monitoring Report, which is considered by Cabinet each December and published on the Council's website here. In addition, the figure is calculated every time the Council takes a Local Plan to public examination.</p> <p>Producing the figure is resource-intensive – involving a lot of desktop and onsite research and the figure is very complex to calculate, therefore it cannot be provided more frequently than stated above.</p>

				This process is in line with Government guidance and what other local authorities do.
CSC012	Physically active adults	Ian Brooke	Is there any KPI which records number of users of our leisure centres instead of this?	<p>There are absolutely KPIs which we could use relating to leisure centre use, but the benefit of the Active Lives results is that they take into account more than just people that are using leisure centres. For Active Lives, Sport England send out lifestyle questionnaires to a sample of randomly selected households across England each year - on a local level this equates to circa 500 households per district (more for some areas) and spanning all areas of deprivation based on Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) data. Although this is a snapshot of society it does allow us to gain an overview of what physical activity is being done generally, across the board - in parks and green spaces, community centres, at home and of course in traditional leisure settings.</p> <p>The most recent data from Active Lives for Oxford City shows that 74.4% people are reporting as active (at least 150 minutes physical activity a week) with a further 11.2% reporting as fairly active (30-149 minutes physical activity a week).</p>

				More information can be viewed here .
RS005	Number of cases in the private rented sector, where homelessness prevented following intervention by the Tenancy Relations Officer	Ian Wright	The target for 2022/23 was exceeded – is this anything to do with the implementation of Selective Licensing?	There has been a 13% increase in Tenancy Relations Officer (TRO)* service requests following the introduction of Selective Licensing – therefore the number of homelessness preventions has increased as the TRO advises both tenants and landlords of the legislation and their rights and obligations. This usually ensures that a tenant does not lose their home without the landlord following the correct procedure and the law. <i>*The Council has 1 TRO, who deals with illegal evictions and threatened evictions in private rented properties.</i>
			Is the Council on track to meet the target of 120 by the end of 2023/24?	The target is likely to be met as the volume of service requests increases, however as the Council has only 1 Tenancy Relations Officer (TRO) this will be dependent on resource availability.
HSC014	Percentage of council owned stock that has an EPC below C	Nerys Parry	Is EPC below C A-B or D-G? On the face of it (assuming 'below C' means D-G), it looks as though there has been improvement, but the RAG-rating is red. Can the end of year result for 2022/23 be clarified?	Below C is EPC ratings D, E, F and G. Red RAG rating does not relate to this action.
			Why does the result for Q1 2023/24	It is an annual target, not quarterly.

			state 'N/A' – is there a result which is missing?	2023/24 Project delivery has not commenced therefore figure remains at last report of 23.6%.
--	--	--	---	--

This page is intentionally left blank