

WEST OXFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

ENVIRONMENT OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

THURSDAY 30 JANUARY 2014

REVIEW OF PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

REPORT OF THE HEAD OF ENVIRONMENT AND COMMERCIAL SERVICES

(Contact: Claire Locke, Tel: (01993) 861344)

(The decisions on this matter will be recommendations to Cabinet)

1. PURPOSE

To respond to member concerns; update members on current factors influencing monitored environmental performance and recommend changes to some indicators.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

That Cabinet be recommended:

- (a) That, current performance indicators on litter and detritus, graffiti and fly posting be deleted but some management information should still be collected; and
- (b) That, a new performance indicator for graffiti be introduced to reflect the percentage of reported graffiti that is removed within 4 weeks.
- (c) That performance indicators SS2, SS3, SS4, and SS5 are amended as set out in paragraph 3.15

3. BACKGROUND

Review of Environmental Quality Performance Indicators

- 3.1. When the requirement to report National Performance indicator NI 195 relating to litter, Detritus, Graffiti and Fly posting was withdrawn in 2010, the decision was taken by the Council to retain this data collection and reporting as members were keen to maintain reporting of these performance standards.
- 3.2. NI 195 was designed to measure the Local Environmental Quality (LEQ) as a member of the public would see it. During the year an officer would survey 900 transects (which are 50 metres in length). Approximately 300 transects were surveyed from 5 target wards in each of the three 4-monthly reporting periods (April – July; August November; and December – March). It measured the extent of litter, detritus, graffiti and fly posting over a variety of different land uses ranging from a Grade A (clean) to Grade D (heavily affected). In all cases, the indicator measured the percentage of sites which fell below a Grade B – as this is the way the public perceive cleanliness.
- 3.3. Following the withdrawal of NI 195, an opportunity was presented to implement a more bespoke system to measure performance. Surveys now take place quarterly and the target wards for each quarter are selected from the West Oxfordshire District Council (WODC) cleansing operative areas.

Litter and Detritus

- 3.4. Reporting on the environmental quality indicators does require a significant amount of in-house resources, although monitoring inspections are undertaken as part of overall contract management and monitoring to ensure suitable standards are being achieved. Ceasing formal monitoring against this indicator would not mean that checks on street cleansing would cease – this would continue as a contract monitoring tool. The level of complaints received, particularly on litter, also serve as a way of monitoring performance – generally complaint levels are very low. A spike in complaints would indicate problems may be occurring however this should be highlighted by contract monitoring officers before complaints are received.
- 3.5. The monitoring and reporting of the indicators themselves serves no useful purpose for the management of the service and are probably difficult to interpret by the members and public. It is recommended that the indicators on litter and detritus are no longer reported although some management information will still be collected.

Graffiti

- 3.6. The District does unfortunately suffer from graffiti in some locations. Some performance monitoring on graffiti is therefore useful. The current indicator provides a snapshot and may not be truly representative of the extent of the problem or indicate the Council's success in intervention. It is therefore suggested the existing PI is deleted and replaced with more useful indicators. Suggested indicators are:
- Number of cases of Graffiti reported during the quarter (Aim – to monitor the prevalence of the problem and enable this to be raised in the wider context of anti-social behaviour).
 - The percentage of incidents of graffiti where enforcement action is taken, when the graffiti has not been removed within 4 weeks of it being reported. (Aim – to indicate that WODC is taking a robust approach to Graffiti. Enforcement activity includes informal letter through to service of formal notice or prosecution but should result in removal of graffiti even if this means works are completed in default). This would monitor:
 - i. Performance of Environment & Commercial Services in the graffiti removal they are responsible for, and,
 - ii. Performance of the Public Protection service in the enforcement activity necessary to achieve graffiti removal by third parties (i.e. utility companies).
- 3.7. The management information to enable these PIs to be calculated is already recorded, specific data recording in relation to enforcement action if graffiti has not been removed after 4 weeks could be introduced by the Public Protection Service, with little or no impact on resources.

Fly Posting

- 3.8. Fly posting is not a major concern in the district and most fly posting relates to charity or community events such as School or Church fetes. The Council is unlikely to wish to take enforcement action against the organisers of this type of event. Instead the Council has encouraged event organisers to seek permission to place posters and ensure they are removed after 7 days. The Council would consider a more robust approach if event organisers fail to adhere to these guidelines or where commercial event organisers place posters irresponsibly or fail to remove them. It is

recommended the current PI on fly posting is deleted although Environment & Commercial Services and Public Protection will continue to monitor the situation. Should fly posting become a problem in the future, the situation could be reviewed.

Household Waste and Recycling Performance

3.9. The Council currently monitors Household waste and recycling performance with targets set against each of the following:

SS2 – Residual household waste per household

SS3 – Percentage of household waste sent for reuse, recycling and composting.

SS4 – Percentage of household waste arisings which have been sent by the authority for recycling.

SS5 – Percentage of household waste sent by the authority for composting or treatment by anaerobic digestion.

3.10. Whilst overall performance is excellent the current high targets are not being achieved, due to a number of factors but notably:

- the Environment Agency decision that street cleansing arisings cannot be composted,
- a reflection of the national trend for an increase in tonnage of waste per household
- a downturn in recycling percentages as the packaging industry reduce packaging so the amount of recyclable waste in the waste stream decreases
- A drop off in participation in recycling/composting schemes – participation is usually at its highest immediately following service changes when awareness is raised.
- A dry summer during 2013/14 which reduced plant growth and therefore the quantity of garden waste presented for composting.

3.11. WODC can influence figures achieved to a certain extent through the services provided and the educational and promotional work it delivers (frequently in partnership with the Oxfordshire Waste Partnership).

3.12. A contract has now been put in place by Oxfordshire County Council for street sweepings to be collected bulked and transported for reprocessing from November 2013, thereby diverting this waste from landfill. It is estimated 65% - 90% of street sweeping will be 'recycled' in this way. With these street sweepings contributing to 1.2% of our total recycling figures, 65% of this figure equates to 0.78% and 90% equates to 1.08%, which will push our recycling figure towards 63%.

3.13. The Council through the Oxfordshire Waste Partnership has already agreed to revised recycling targets, as part of the five-year review of the joint municipal waste management strategy consultation completed in 2012/13. These are to:

- Recycle or compost at least 65% of household waste by March 2020
- Recycle or compost at least 70% of household waste by March 2025

3.14. From April 2014 the residual waste from West Oxfordshire will no longer be landfilled and will be processed at the new energy to waste facility at Ardley. Consequently nearly all of the household waste from West Oxfordshire will be reused in this way, with only very low quantities of waste, being landfilled, where specific materials are not suitable for the energy from waste facility.

3.15. Based on current performance, projected performance by year end 2013/14 is recommended that performance targets be amended for 2014/15 as follows:

PI Ref	Description	Current target 2014/15	Q2 2013/14 performance actual	Projected year end performance for 2013/14	Recommended amended target for 2014/15
SS2	Residual household waste per household	84Kg	91.28Kg	92.5Kg	89 Kg
SS3	Percentage of household waste sent for reuse, recycling and composting	66%	61.92%	61%	63%
SS4	Percentage of household waste arisings which have been sent by the authority for recycling	29%	27.31%	26.5%	27%
SS5	Percentage of household waste sent by the Authority for composting or treatment by anaerobic digestion	41%	34.6%	31%	36%

3.16. Targets can be reviewed again in 12 months' time, with a view to increasing targets and achieving agreed strategic targets of 65% recycling or composting by 2020.

3.17. West Oxfordshire remains in the top ten performing authorities in the Country, ranked as 8th in 2012/13. If WODC achieves the recommended reduced targets above it is predicted that the Council will still maintain its position within the top performing authorities in the country.

4. ALTERNATIVES/OPTIONS

4.1. That, existing performance indicators are retained or are amended to monitor performance against different criteria or targets.

4.2. That existing targets are maintained, despite projections that they will not be met.

5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

None

6. RISKS

Failure to effectively monitor performance could result in an impact on service level however reported performance indicators are only one form of performance management and where indicators are removed robust management of performance would remain in place.

7. REASONS

The recommendations accord with the corporate aim to 'protect and enhance the environment of West Oxfordshire and maintain the district as a clean, beautiful place with low levels of crime and nuisance'.

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Background Papers:
None