



WEST OXFORDSHIRE
DISTRICT COUNCIL

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Name and Date of Committee	EXECUTIVE – 17 APRIL 2024
Subject	UBICO BUSINESS PLAN 2024-2025
Wards Affected	ALL
Accountable Member	Councillor Andy Graham – Leader of the Council. Email: andy.graham@westoxon.gov.uk
Accountable Officer	Giles Hughes – Chief Executive. Email: giles.hughes@westoxon.gov.uk
Report Author	Simon Anthony – Business Manager, Environmental Services. Email: simon.anthony@publicagroup.uk
Purpose	To consider the Ubico Business Plan 2024-25, which has been produced by Ubico in consultation with the Directors and Shareholders, and to recommend that the Leader (as Shareholder Representative) approves the plan.
Annexes	Annex A – Ubico Business Plan 2024-2025
Recommendations	That the Executive Resolves to: <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Note the 2024/25 Ubico Business Plan; and2. Note that the Leader of the Council, as shareholder representative, will sign the written resolution to approve the Ubico Business Plan 2024-2025 in due course.
Corporate Priorities	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Putting Residents First• A Better Environment for People and Wildlife• Responding to the Climate and Ecological Emergency
Key Decision	NO
Exempt	NO
Consultees/ Consultation	The following people have all been consulted on this report and the detail contained within: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Councillor Andy Graham• Councillor Lidia Arciszewska

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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• All Members as part of Ubico briefing on 8 February 2024• Senior Council Officers• Senior Publica Officers |
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1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 Ubico is a Teckal company wholly owned by local authorities including West Oxfordshire District Council (WODC). The company delivers environmental services on behalf of its shareholders, including WODC, and is required to submit an annual business plan for approval by its shareholders.
- 1.2 The Leader of the Council, as the Shareholder Representative, has authority to approve the Business Plan.
- 1.3 Whilst the Leader of the Council has authority, as shareholder representative, to approve the business plan, it is being brought to Executive for members to note and consider.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 West Oxfordshire District Council (WODC), is a shareholder of Ubico limited, a teckal company designed to deliver environmental services, offering better value for money than commercial contracts.
- 2.2 The Teckal model enables councils to commission services without the costs associated with an EU procurement process. Ubico delivers environmental services on behalf of the council at a price which reflects the actual cost of service provision, but in doing so holds no assets, and so the depot it operates from, the vehicles it uses to perform the services and the waste and recycling containers which are provided to residents, are all owned or leased by the authority. This ensures that the shareholders have full control over high value expenditure.
- 2.3 As part of the establishment of Ubico, a number of items were identified as reserved matters for council approval to ensure that shareholder councils retained an element of control over their company.
- 2.4 The reserved matters decisions fall to the shareholder representatives to determine. For WODC this is the leader of the council.
- 2.5 Members received a Business Plan engagement presentation directly from Ubico at an All Member Seminar in early February and their comments will be verbally given to the executive at the meeting.

3. MAIN POINTS

- 3.1 The Business Plan provides the vehicle to carry forward and address the issues identified by the Ubico shareholder councils. The 5 year vision developed by the Ubico board of directors in 2021 identifies the following priorities:
 - Leveraging Synergies and economies of scale
 - Harnessing opportunities to deliver value back to our partners
 - Using technology to drive operational efficiency

- Understanding our communities needs
- Inspiring our workforce to be committed to providing value for money and carbon neutral services.

3.2 Ubico's 2024/25 Business Plan and 5-year vision is built around four key pillars:

People

We will have a well-trained, supported and engaged workforce who live our values and are proud to work for Ubico.

Operations

We will deliver high quality services, which remain safe and compliant, seeking continuous improvement in productivity, value and service excellence. We will harness innovation where appropriate and will explore synergies and opportunities for partnership and cross boundary working.

Climate

We will minimise our environmental impact and support our shareholders to meet their carbon neutral targets, integrating carbon reduction opportunities wherever reasonably possible in both our fleet and non-fleet activities.

Business Development

We will build business development capability which enhances our partnerships and allows for effective identification, analysis and presentation to shareholders of potential new business opportunities. We will explore opportunities that aren't simply about profit, including those that would deliver greater value, help our communities or improve services.

3.3 In support of the council's service related and financial priorities, Ubico is continuing to work in partnership with Publica and the Council as part of the Environmental Services Innovation Program (ESIP) which is bringing forward opportunities to deliver better services to residents, reduce the effect services have on the climate and environment, and capture efficiency and financial savings for all partners. This will therefore further support the Business Plan. During the last year ESIP has delivered the following:

- Transfer of Business Waste back-office function from Ubico to Publica which is planned to increase income and improve customer satisfaction.
- Waste Collection Review to understand collection options, potential savings, increase recycling rates and impact on residents.
- Round Optimisation Modelling is underway to identify potential financial and carbon benefits of more efficient rounds. The modelling work will investigation potential shorter 'urban' rounds for a future fully electric waste collection vehicle.

- A review of street cleansing and grounds maintenance services and investment in in-cab technology by the Council
- Implemented a stream of work to adopt a vehicle strategy and support the Councils net-zero by 2030 target.

3.4 One of the Ubico Directors will attend the Executive meeting and be able to answer any questions.

4. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

4.1 The Leader of the Council, as shareholder representative, has delegated authority to approve the Ubico business plan (which forms part of the 5 year vision), and there is no need, other than to support transparency for a report to be considered and noted by executive.

5. CONCLUSIONS

5.1 We recommend the Business Plan is accepted to meet the company's members agreement, which is to approve the Business Plan.

6. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

6.1 There are no additional financial implications associated with the Ubico Business Plan as the budget has already been approved. Ubico has committed to supporting the council deliver savings through the Environmental Services Innovation Program (ESIP) to support its medium-term financial strategy (MTFS).

7. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

7.1 The Business Plan has to be adopted in accordance with the Shareholder Agreement for Ubico.

8. RISK ASSESSMENT

8.1 There are no specific risks in adopting the Ubico Business Plan. The council is a shareholder of the company and has already committed to a contract extension until 2026.

8.2 If the council does not approve the plan there is a risk that the company will not be able to support some of the activities necessary to deliver the savings set out in the council's MTFS or its corporate priorities.

9. EQUALITIES IMPACT

9.1 Not Applicable

10. CLIMATE AND ECOLOGICAL EMERGENCIES IMPLICATIONS

10.1 Climate implications feature heavily in the Business Plan with climate being a strategic pillar and emissions benchmarking and carbon reduction goals clearly detailed throughout the plan.

If the council does not approve this plan it could risk delivery of these targets and progress towards the Council's own net zero goal by 2030.

II. BACKGROUND PAPERS

II.1 None

(END)