



WEST OXFORDSHIRE
DISTRICT COUNCIL

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Name and Date of Committee	EXECUTIVE – 11 JUNE 2025
Subject	SERVICE PERFORMANCE REPORT 2024-25 QUARTER FOUR
Wards Affected	ALL
Accountable Member	Councillor Andy Graham – Leader of the Council. Email: andy.graham@westoxon.gov.uk
Accountable Officer	Giles Hughes – Chief Executive Officer. Email: giles.hughes@westoxon.gov.uk
Report author	Alison Borrett – Senior Performance Analyst. Email: alison.borrett@publicagroup.uk
Purpose	To provide details of the Council's operational performance at the end of 2024-25 Quarter Four (Q4).
Annex	Annex A - Council Priorities report Annex B - Corporate Plan Action Tracker Annex C - Performance indicator report
Recommendation.	That the Executive Resolves to: I. Note the 2024/25 Q4 service performance report.
Corporate Priorities	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Putting Residents First• Enabling a Good Quality of Life for All• Creating a Better Environment for People and Wildlife• Responding to the Climate and Ecological Emergency• Working Together for West Oxfordshire
Key Decision	NO
Exempt	NO
Consultees/ Consultation	Publica Directors, Assistant Directors, Business Managers, Service Managers and Service Leads.

I. BACKGROUND

- I.1** The new Council Plan was adopted in January 2023 and the Action Plan, setting out how the priorities within the Council Plan will be delivered, then followed. Additionally, following on from the external audit report in August 2023 which included a recommendation to review performance management to match the Council Plan and measure performance, a new performance framework has been developed. This includes a Corporate Action Plan Tracker and a Priority Report alongside the service output metrics.
- I.2** A high-level Commissioning Framework was approved by the Executive in October 2020, which sets out the relationship between Publica and the Council and their respective responsibilities. Publica provides the necessary information, including a range of performance indicators, to the Council so it can assess whether the commissioned services are being delivered in accordance with the agreed quality and standard.
- I.3** The Council's Chief Executive is responsible for reviewing and approving the information provided in this report prior to its publication.

2. COUNCIL PRIORITY REPORT

- 2.1** Progress on actions in the Corporate Plan for Q4 include:
- The Youth Development Officer began their role in February, working with local providers to engage directly with young people, support internal youth-focused initiatives—such as the Local Plan consultation and related communications—and collaborate closely with Oxfordshire County Council to strengthen coordinated youth engagement across the district.
 - The Council has submitted its draft Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) Charging Schedule for independent examination. A Programme Officer has been appointed to support the examination process and serve as a point of contact for all parties, with the hearing sessions for the examination being held virtually on Tuesday 10 June.
 - The Council has formally resubmitted a revised Net Zero policy for the Salt Cross Area Action Plan (AAP) to the Planning Inspectorate. The revised policy will now undergo re-examination through a formal hearing process led by the appointed Planning Inspector, with a final decision expected later this year.
 - The Section 106 Agreement for the Pudlicote Farm Habitat Bank was finalised in March 2025. This allows the landowner to register the habitat bank with Natural England on the National Gain Sites Register and begin selling off-site biodiversity units.
 - Round 4 of Westhive concluded at the end of March, with fourteen projects actively fundraising.
- 2.2** The Council Priority highlight report is attached at Annex A with an overview of progress against all actions in the Corporate Plan is attached at Annex B.

3. SERVICE PERFORMANCE

Overall, the Council's performance this quarter has been largely positive, with significant progress made in areas such as the reduction of long-term empty properties, the percentage of official land charge searches completed within 10 days and leisure centre visits. Customer satisfaction, planning determination times and gym memberships also remain strong, reflecting the Council's commitment to delivering quality services. However, there were some negative trends observed,

particularly in the number of affordable homes delivered and the percentage of household waste recycled.

3.1 Service performance above target:

- Processing times for Council Tax Support Change Events (3.42 days against a target of 5 days)
- Percentage of Housing Benefit overpayment due to LA error/admin delay (0.33% against a target of 0.35%)
- Customer Satisfaction (97.34% against a target of 90%)
- Percentage of major planning applications determined within agreed timescales (100% against a target of 70%)
- Percentage of minor planning applications determined within agreed timescales (93.98% against a target of 65%)
- Percentage of other planning applications determined within agreed timescales (97.54% against a target of 80%)
- Percentage of official land charge searches completed within 10 days (98.9% against a target of 90%)
- Percentage of high risk food premises inspected within target timescales day (100% against a target of 90%)
- Missed bins per 100,000 (97 against a target of 110)
- (Snapshot) Number of gym memberships (5,447 memberships against a target of 5,000 memberships)
- Number of visits to the leisure centres (269,003 visits against a target of 196,780)

3.2 Service Performance near target:

- Percentage of Council Tax Collected (97.96% against a target of 98%)
- Percentage of Non-Domestic Rates Collected (97.78% against a target of 98.5%)
- Percentage of Planning Appeals Allowed (cumulative) (33.05% against a target of 30%)

3.3 Service Performance below target:

Processing times for Council Tax Support new claims (21.06 days against a target of 20 days) and Processing times for Housing Benefit Change of Circumstances (5.2 days against a target of 4 days)

Although the Council is currently above the 20-day target for processing new Council Tax Support (CTS) claims, with an average of 24.95 days specifically in Q4 2024/25, performance remains stable and continues to show steady improvement compared to a peak of over 30 days in Q1 2023/24. The slight rise in Q4 processing times can largely be attributed to two factors: the temporary shutdown of the Council offices over Christmas, which created a backlog, and a spike in customer phone enquiries, which tend to peak during Q4 and required the redeployment of staff resources.

Despite these pressures, the service has effectively managed workloads, and turnaround times remain significantly improved compared to pandemic-era levels. Continued stabilisation of processing times is expected as operational pressures ease and service adjustments take effect.

It is also important to note that the volume of HB change of circumstances is significantly declining as applications are progressively transitioned to Universal Credit under the managed migration process. As a result, any delays in processing HB applications now have a more pronounced impact on average processing times.

Number of Affordable Homes Delivered (198 against a target of 274)

54 affordable homes were delivered in Q4, bringing the total number of completions for 2024/25 to 198. This falls slightly short of the initial forecast from the housing developers in Q1 of 218 homes for the year. However, the shortfall is relatively modest, with only 20 homes delayed into the next financial year. A further 122 affordable homes are expected to be completed by July 2025, positioning the Council well for a strong start to the new reporting period.

While the district did not meet the full-year target of 274 homes, progress has remained steady and encouraging. Delivery has been supported by a strong pipeline of large developments, many of which are due to come forward in the next year. Importantly, more than half of the homes delivered this year—101 in total—were for social rent, ensuring that genuinely affordable housing is being prioritised to meet rising demand across the district.

The Council remains committed to working with registered providers and developers to accelerate delivery and ensure future targets are met, helping to provide high-quality, accessible homes for those who need them most.

It's worth noting that completion rates vary throughout the year due to the nature of housing developments, which often span multiple months or even years. Some projects may be phased over several years, contributing to fluctuations in completion numbers. The service notes several larger-scale developments are slated for housing delivery during 2025-26.

3.4 A full report is attached at Annex C and should be looked at in conjunction with this report.

3.5 As previously agreed, where possible, broader benchmarking has been included in the full performance report to gain a more robust and insightful evaluation of performance. Where benchmarking data is not currently available or outdated, this is noted, and further investigations will be undertaken to look at options.

4. OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

4.1 This report will be reviewed by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee at its meeting on 4 June 2025. The draft minutes of that meeting will be circulated to all Members and any recommendations from the Committee will be reported to the 11 June 2025 Executive meeting.

5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

5.1 There are no direct financial implications from this report.

6. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

6.1 None specifically because of this report. However, a failure to meet statutory deadlines or standards in some services may expose the Council to legal challenge and/or financial liability.

7. RISK ASSESSMENT

7.1 Contained in this report.

8. EQUALITIES IMPACT

8.1 None

9. CLIMATE AND ECOLOGICAL EMERGENCIES IMPLICATIONS

9.1 Contained in this report.

10. BACKGROUND PAPERS

10.1 None

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