



WEST OXFORDSHIRE
DISTRICT COUNCIL

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Name and date of Committee	Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee - Thursday 3 February 2022
Report Number	Agenda Item No. 5 (work programme 4)
Subject	Service Performance Report 2021-22 Quarter Two
Wards affected	All
Accountable member	All relevant Cabinet Members
Accountable officer	Giles Hughes, Chief Executive Tel: (01993) 861658 Email: giles.hughes@westoxon.gov.uk
Summary/Purpose	This report provides details of service performance during Q2
Annexes	Annex A - Performance Indicator report Annex B – Waste Management Indicator report
Recommendation	That the Committee reviews, and challenges as appropriate, performance for 2021-22 Q2
Corporate priorities	Climate Action: Leading the way in protecting and enhancing the environment by taking action locally on climate change and biodiversity A Vibrant District Economy: Securing future economic success through supporting existing local businesses and attracting new businesses to deliver the economic ambitions of the Local Industrial Strategy Meeting the Housing Needs of our Changing Population: Securing the provision of market and affordable housing of a high quality for a wide range of householders making their home in West Oxfordshire
Key Decision	No
Exempt	No

I. BACKGROUND

- I.1. The Council monitors service performance each quarter, and a report on progress towards achieving the aim and priorities set out in the Corporate Plan is produced at the end of Q2 and Q4. The Q2 update on progress on the priorities will be encompassed within the Annual Monitoring Report and presented to Cabinet in December 2021 followed by the Overview and Scrutiny committees.
- I.2. A review of performance indicators is currently underway, and Portfolio Holders are having discussions with relevant managers about priority areas and finding metrics that would be most representative and provide assurance as to how the Council is performing.
- I.3. The Commissioning Framework sets out the relationship between Publica and the Council and their respective responsibilities. Publica must ensure that it provides the necessary information to the Council so it can assess whether the commissioned services are being delivered in accordance with the agreed quality and standard. The Council's Chief Executive is responsible for reviewing and approving the information provided in this report prior to its publication.
- I.4. The Council's Chief Executive has received a report on service performance, and he has assessed it in line with the high level Commissioning Statement. He has noted the capacity issues and high workloads in some services which have contributed to a reduced level of operational performance in those services over the last few months, as well as the actions that are being taken to improve performance. He has drawn particular attention to the following:
 - i. 19 July marked the lifting of all Covid-19 restrictions, and some staff have returned to the office while others are working in a hybrid style in line with Publica's Agile Working Strategy 2020. Whilst we need to ensure that staff are available to deliver services whether in the office or not, the change to more flexible working practices has presented an opportunity to review office space requirements and identify any space that can be repurposed. Draft office layouts have been developed for Woodgreen with proposals for desk layouts, meeting rooms, breakout areas and new tenanted areas. The Chief Executive will be consulting with Members on the proposals shortly;
 - ii. Leisure visits and gym memberships are operating at around 75% and 70% of previous levels respectively. Both Chipping Norton Leisure Centre and Carterton have good membership levels, while Windrush is facing competition from PureGym which is a self-serve 'no frills' gym offer. In response, GLL is revising its marketing and promotions for Witney;
 - iii. Customer satisfaction ratings for services delivered by phone have continued to remain high throughout the Covid-19 pandemic. West Oxfordshire ranked within the top 10 councils on the GovMetric Telephone Channel Satisfaction Index for August 2021. Face to face surveys which only restarted in July are also indicating that satisfaction is high with this channel, although the number surveyed was low due to low footfall;
 - iv. The website satisfaction indicator has been suspended while the service explores other methods for assessing the effectiveness of this communication channel. The Council recognises that it needs to focus on the ability to provide more options for accessing the Council's services including the potential for channel shift to quicker and more cost effective methods of communication where possible, such as the website. The Channel

Choice project has commenced, and processes are beginning to be reviewed in those service areas that receive high volumes of calls.

2. SERVICE PERFORMANCE

- 2.1. The services which relate to the work of this Committee are Environmental Regulatory Services, Waste Management, and Parking; the relevant indicators are listed at the front of the Performance Indicator report at **Annex A** with pages **20 to 25** of that Annex providing the further relevant information. Waste Management indicators were not available for reporting to Cabinet in December, and a more detailed report is provided at **Annex B**.
- 2.2. Performance for services that relate to the work of this Committee was mixed. Of the six targeted indicators, one indicator achieved its target (Green), two indicators achieved their targets 'within tolerance' (Amber), and two indicators did not achieve their targets (Red). There was no data to report for one indicator, 'the percentage of high risk food premises inspected within target timescales' as no high risk food inspections were due in Q2.
- 2.3. The indicators that did not meet their targets (RED) are considered below together with rectifying actions:

- The number missed bins per 100,000 scheduled collections increased steeply in Q2 due to a combination of reasons including the fuel shortage as well as positive Covid-19 cases and a shortage of HGV drivers. In addition to fuel refilling limits, Ubico had to use smaller vehicles as there are only three BP (contracted) garages in the District that can be accessed by full size waste vehicles. The smaller vehicles have less capacity and required multiple trips to be made which created a delay in collections, and therefore repeat reports of missed bins. The use of agency staff and crew members who are unfamiliar with the allocated rounds will also have contributed to the increase in the number of misses.

Resolution: The service reports that improvements are already evident with collections back to normal service. The introduction of In-Cab technology on 29 September is expected to improve efficiency in service delivery including reducing the number of misses by providing crew members with assistance to find all of the properties on their particular round.

- The amount of residual household waste per household improved in Q2 at 95.25 kg per household, a reduction of over 4 kg compared to Q2 a year ago. The reduction is likely to reflect the return of some workers to the office following the lifting of Covid-19 related restrictions.

Resolution: It is likely that the amount of residual household waste per household will continue to be affected by the impact of the pandemic on living style and work patterns. The Council is completing a comprehensive communications programme which is running throughout the year to highlight the importance of reduce and reuse before recycling. In addition, communications are being sent to residents on behalf of the Oxfordshire Resources and Waste Partnership which the Council is a member of, and over the Christmas period there will be an emphasis on reducing waste food, which should have a positive effect on waste flows.

A note on waste management data

- 2.4. Over the last few months, a verification exercise has been undertaken on the Council's waste management data. Following the publication of local authority waste management data for 2019-20 by Defra earlier this year (based on the data submitted by the Council into the WasteDataFlow), inconsistencies in the reporting of the combined recycling rate and the amount of residual household waste per household were identified between the Council, Defra, and Oxfordshire County Council.
- 2.5. The data is complex due to the large number of data sources from third parties that have to be collated and managed. The data team reviewed the sources of data and the calculations, with much effort being placed on producing accurate figures. The team consulted waste specialists at the County Council, Defra and Ulico as part of the verification exercise.
- 2.6. Waste management data from 2018-19 was reviewed. The Council reported waste management indicators for 2018/19 were found to be consistent with the team's recalculated figures. The Council reported combined recycling rate for both 2019-20 and 2020-21 were found to have been over stated due to higher reports of dry recycling tonnages, while residual household waste per household had been under reported. The main issues identified were:
 - During 2019-20 and 2020-21, residual household waste tonnages did not include all the components of residual waste, for example, rejects in the recycling stream were not included. The inclusion of the additional components in particular rejects means that residual waste is higher than previously reported, and the recycling rate is lower.
 - The co-mingled dry recycling tonnages report from Suez included both household and trade recycling, as well as rejects in the recycling stream. Going forwards, only household dry recycling tonnages which go for recycling will be included in the calculation.
- 2.7. Over the last three years, the annual combined recycling rate has remained broadly consistent between 58.1% and 58.7%. Residual waste per household has crept up and reached relatively high levels during 2020-21.
- 2.8. During 2020-21, total household waste tonnages increased by 13% as a result of Covid-19, and householders working from home and/or self-isolating, when the presentation of all types of waste increased. The combined recycling rate for the year did not increase due to the increase in residual waste tonnages (13.6%).
- 2.9. Moving into 2021-22, total household waste tonnages have fallen back slightly which is due to lower amounts of dry recycling and composting in the first six months of the year. On the other hand, residual waste tonnages have remained elevated especially during Q1 when the last lockdown was ending and some restrictions were still in place. Some gains were made by the end of Q2; although, the combined recycling rate was lower (60.40%) than a year ago (61.84%), it was not dissimilar to 2019-20 (60.51%).
- 2.10. The amount of food waste sent for anaerobic digestion, although a small proportion of the total sent for recycling, continues to be higher than pre-Covid-19 times.
- 2.11. A full report is attached at **Annex B**.

3. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

3.1. None

4. RISK ASSESSMENT

4.1. None

5. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

5.1. None

6. BACKGROUND PAPERS

6.1. None