

Bringing the
small business
relationship
model to the
doors of the
large business.

 One
West



Steve de- Bruin

Head of Client and Business
Services – One West

The logo for One West features a cluster of grey circles of varying sizes on the left, resembling a molecular or network structure. To the right, the word "One" is in a smaller, white, sans-serif font, and "West" is in a larger, white, sans-serif font, both set against an orange background.

One West

- Started in 2016 as a Specialist Professional service provider
- Clear direction from the start on well-managed growth from the Director
- The business team (as we grew) was well-resourced (key)
- Now generating over £1.1 million income
- Over 99% retention rates




The Golden Thread

- Understanding the needs of our team and our clients
- Offer personalisation and customisation
- Become deeply invested and trust our brand
- Prepare to tailor your services to suit
- Check in regularly without any sales pitch
- Become known as a go-to provider

In simple terms

- The best small businesses make you feel like they are only serving you.
- They know what you want.
- They know about you.
- They are great at relationship-building
- They work hard to know everyone



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- **42%** of buyers of services want a quick speedy service
 - **95%** of clients use the same service, keep these services well-resourced and loyalty will continue
 - **17%** of clients are driven to buy new services on impulse, driven by information in media, good relationships, and trust
 - **84%** of clients value the personable approach over simple delivery

By learning what really drives your customers and adjusting experiences to meet people where they're at today, you can become essential to the lives of their consumers, and poised for long-term success.



APSE (Southern Region) Commercialisation, Income Generation & Trading Network Meeting

**Developing business acumen to
create a new commercial culture
(creation of assessment tool and
framework)**

19 October 2023

Led by: Melanie Graham,
Operations Manager for Business, Performance &
Service Improvement, Environment & Place
Oxfordshire County Council





Today we would like to

- Share our thoughts on developing an assessment tool & framework to maximise business acumen and start to develop more commercial appetites and practice
- Hear from you, have you already done this, are you interested in getting involved?
- Start to think about how we go forward





Environment & Place (A brief introduction)



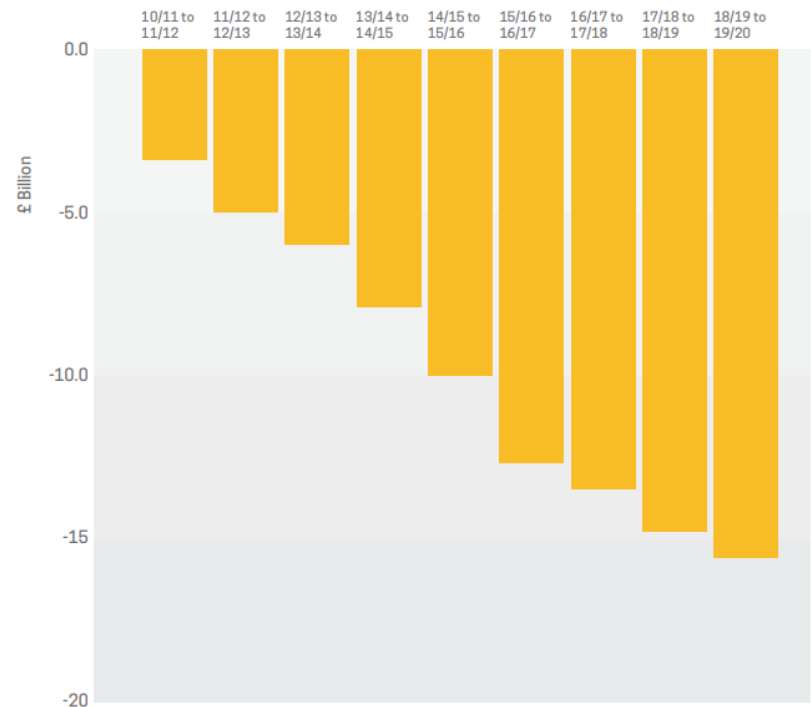
- Oxfordshire has a population of circa 700,000
- Oxfordshire covers approximately 1000 square miles
- E&P gross expenditure budget £147m (£68m income)
- 46 Major Infrastructure Schemes
- Circa £600m growth monies
- 800 officers



What's driving us?

- Local services face a £7.8 billion funding gap by 2025 (LGA, 2022)
- The amount of money authorities have to spend from government grants, council tax and business rates fell by 17.5% between 2009/10 and 2019/20, before partially recovering. However, in 2021/22 it was still 10.2% below 2009/10 levels. (Institute for Local Government, 2023)

REDUCTION IN CORE GOVERNMENT FUNDING





Current financial challenges and impact

Section 114 notices, 2017-2024, as at 5 September 2023 (2023/24 prices), IfG



Source: Institute for Government analysis of various sources including local authority press releases and media reports
[Local government section 114 notices](#)



Environment & Place – Our early assessment

- ❑ Across E&P we have mixed views with regards what “commercial” means but a shared recognition that we need to get better at managing our business.
- ❑ We have put and continue to put a significant effort into getting our business basics right (business planning, performance, budgetary deep dives/finance training/workforce development & planning)
- ❑ We are actively exploring digital solutions
- ❑ We commission/contract **but do not provide** and are beginning to explore and maximise use of social value in our procurement and future contracts
- ❑ We have a good relationship with our Business Partners and work closely to problem solve
- ❑ We have a highly committed workforce wishing to do their best for local residents with a strong sense of public sector values



Peer support network to facilitate improvement

- Proactive staff engagement
- Innovation forums
- Move to automation & digitalisation
- Introduction of benchmarking
- Sharing best practice
- Member engagement
- Introduction of new language
- Good relationships with business partners

1. Culture

- Annual Business Plans
- Business Continuity
- Performance & Risk
- Good financial management
- Workforce Development & Succession
- Data rich & benchmarking
- Proactive savings
- Managing stakeholder expectations

2. Business Mgt

- Understood asset
- Social Value
- Effective VfM Assessment
- True cost recovery
- ROI understood
- Effective demand management
- Commissioning & contract excellence
 - Get it right 1st time every time

3. Enhanced Business Mgt

- Exploiting your assets
- Data integrity
- Commercial competency (finance, procurement and legal services)
- Market Review & Testing

4. Service Development

- Appetite for joint ventures
- Partnership working to maximise social value and income opportunity (LAs working with local businesses)

5. Partners/ Joint Venture



**OXFORDSHIRE
COUNTY COUNCIL**

Can we create an Assessment Framework to support our journeys?



General Group Discussion/Feedback



Do you think there is a need for a framework?

5

Does this seem a reasonable approach?



Is there something already out there?



What do you think are the opportunities for developing a framework?



What do you think the challenges may be?





Breakout sessions



Breakout

- a) What is the level of interest?
- b) How can we build confidence in this framework?
- c) How can we ensure consistency in assessment?
- d) What do we need to do to give the document validity?



Facilitator: Phil Whitfield



Breakout

Assuming the framework is go ahead:

- a) What should be our first steps?
- b) What could we deliver over the next 6 months?
- c) How do we bring our Council Members with us?



Facilitator: Seema Masih



Breakout

- a) How might we go about setting up a peer support network?
- b) What role could APSE play?
- c) How do we support each other to get senior buy in?



Group 3

Facilitator: Melanie Graham