1. With regards to two of the measures that are suggested to be removed, could you please clarify:

a. PCV4 (number of new business start-ups): Surely there was a rationale behind including this measure at some point. Will the aim to assess the council's involvement in start-ups be measured in another way. Could you please also clarify whether we would be (if we included this target) on target?

It didn't reflect council performance as it reflected the wider economy far more than what the council does. It is still useful information in the sense of wider economic activity in the city. We have not been able to find any other measure that does not suffer from the same issues, but suggestions welcome.

To be clear, the deletion is recommended from 2017-18 so will still be reported on in this financial year. As it is an annual measure we don't know until Q4 whether it is on track. It was amber last year.

The start-ups measure was originally included when we had LEGI funding and funded many strands of business start-up activity. The current measure is taken from start-up activity undertaken by NWES, which is now funded by the LEP. All locally measured start up figures will be incomplete as they only capture those start ups that have accessed public sector funded support, not support access via banks, accountants etc. The national start up figures (business births) have a two year time lag and again are only collected annually.

The figure is reported in the annual economic assessment

b. VFM3 (% of council partners satisfied with the opportunity to engage with the council): what do you mean with insufficient statistically robust? I am only aware of the issue of "statistical robustness" for actual significance testing, meaning the non-violation of assumptions of e.g. a regression analysis. But as these statistics are purely descriptive, you don't need to worry about robustness, do you? Or do you refer to any issues of validity?

What we mean is that there have only been a handful of responses over recent years (14 last year) which renders the value of the measure fairly low. Obviously the council remains committed to working in partnership (more so than ever given the dwindling of resources) but again we have not been able to come up with an alternative measure that more accurately reflected the performance in this.

2. With regards to VFM4 (the percentage of unavoidable contact): When I checked the 2016 figures the target was at 15%, we saw an increase that year to over 30%, but a number of explanations were given. Surely just putting the target up to 35%, so the decreased performance falls into target again is not a solution?

Most of the increase in the rate has been down to an improvement in the consistency of how we define and log avoidable contact across the council. This makes the higher rate a more accurate record of our performance than the previous lower levels. Increasing the target therefore gives a better point at which to set the 'red' zone of performance, rather than having an unachievably low target that could demotivate staff. We will review this measure at the end of the year, and if we are still comfortably in the 'green' performance zone, we can reduce the target.

We are suggesting revising the target because we haven't been meeting it over the last year or so it is, as a result of detailed work to ensure that we are capturing the true experience of our customers (which is why we did the in-depth analysis). We are now confident that we have good quality baseline information which we can then use to drive down avoidable contact across services and improve our communication and the experience of our customer's.

3.   With regards to general reporting: Many of these are reported in percentages of Satisfied customers. I am not sure what the answer options are. If these are binary items (satisfied/unsatisfied) then that is enough information. However, if the reporting is a Likert scale item with three or more options, then it would be useful to see the remaining distribution. The current reporting shows us the top end (which is good if it improves), but it doesn't tell us anything about the rest of the people. Are they fairly satisfied or are more people now very unsatisfied. I guess more concrete questions:

a.   Could you please clarify the answer formats.

1.   The answer formats vary between questions but all have more than 2 response options.

- The majority are carried out by phone in the 'Local Area Survey' and these all have 5 options broadly along the lines of (very satisfied, fairly satisfied, neither, fairly dissatisfied, very dissatisfied).
- The waste satisfaction survey is carried out via survey monkey and has 4 response options (there is no option to be 'neither satisfied or dissatisfied')
- VFM1 (satisfaction with council service received) has 3 possible responses (poor, satisfactory or good).

b.   Have you been thinking about a wider range of options (if not already used) from not satisfied at all to extremely satisfied on a five point scale. This would enable us to report means and medians and then also have a look at the variance of answers and enable us to report significant changes, which are much more meaningful than changes into one category or simply descriptive changes in mean.

2.   The options above already allow specific service areas to track the mean and medians but standardising the formats in the future would be worthwhile. It would however make it more difficult to compare with previous data.

c.   If there are only three or less answer options would that data be suitable for a significance testing, to see if the change is meaningful, considering any change to the other options. This is where my stats knowledge ends, because I am not sure if two years can be considered as independent observations.

3.   As previously mentioned, only one of the satisfaction measures is measured on a 3 answer scale (VFM1), although it would be advantageous to standardise this alongside other measures in the long-term.