

Business Planning / MTFS Options 2021/22 – 2025/26

YC106

Please fill this pro forma out fully. It is important that options brought forward from Stage 1 are worked up into fuller, more robust proposals that are fit for progression to the formal decision-making process.

Title of Option:	Reduction in Legal Services Support		
Priority:	Your Council	Responsible Officer:	Raymond Prince / Stephen Lawrence-Orumwense
Affected Service(s) and AD:	Corporate Governance / Legal Services - Bernie Ryan	Contact / Lead:	Raymond Prince

Description of Option:

- What is the proposal in essence? What is its scope? What will change?
 - What will be the impact on the Council's objectives and outcomes (please refer to relevant Borough Plan 2019-23 objectives and outcomes, and Borough Plan Evidence Packs)
 - How will the proposal deliver the benefits outlined?
- [Proposals will be mapped to the any new Borough Plan Priorities/Objectives/Outcomes as they emerge – please take account of any likely changes when framing proposals]

Proposal: A reduction in the Legal Services establishment of 4 posts in 2020/21.

Impact: The Legal Service is a demand led service, the size of which is driven and dictated by the level of support which business units within the Council – to include its partners – require in order to deliver on corporate objectives. Accordingly, any decision to reduce the size of the service needs to correlate with a reduction in client demand.

Statutory work: A lot of work carried out by the legal service is statutory work e.g. adult safeguarding legal advice and litigation, child protection legal work and right to buy. This work will be prioritised.

Assumption: That the corporate legal work can continue to be absorbed within the legal service as it has been during the pandemic period. Legal staff have become more self-servicing with extended homeworking and it is assumed that they can continue with reduced admin support going forward and admin support will be prioritised where it provides best value to the service. This assumption is based on analysis of work during the pandemic and assessment of how work will continue to be done in the future.

Benefit: A reduction in staffing cost to the authority.

Financial Benefits Summary

Please provide indicative financial benefits information, including any initial investment costs below. Where figures are speculative and require further detailed work to refine these, please indicate this in the text box below.

Revenue Impacts <i>All figures shown on an incremental basis</i>	2021/22 £000s	2022/23 £000s	2023/24 £000s	2024/25 £000s	2025/26 £000s	Total £000s
New net additional savings	163	-	-	-	-	163

Initial One-Off Investment Costs	2021/22 £000s	2022/23 £000s	2023/24 £000s	2024/25 £000s	2025/26 £000s	Total £000s
Total	-	-	-	-	-	-

Financial Implications Outline

- How have the savings above been determined? Please provide a brief breakdown of the factors considered.
- Is any additional investment required in order to deliver the proposal?
- If relevant, how will additional income be generated and how has the amounts been determined?
- Please describe the nature of one off implementation costs (if applicable)

There has been a reduction in admin support during the lockdown period and it is realistic to assume that this can continue going forward.

Where posts which have income targets are deleted the income target and allocated legal budget will need to be decreased too in order for the saving to be realised in the budget.

Delivery Confidence – Stage 1

At this stage, how confident are you that this option could be delivered and benefits realised as set out? (1 = not at all confident; 5 = very confident)	3
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Indicative timescale for implementation

Est. start date for consultation DD/MM/YY	01/10/2020	Est. completion date for implementation DD/MM/YY	01/04/2021
Is there an opportunity for implementation before April 2021? Y/N ; any constraints?	Partly		

Implementation Details

- How will the proposal be implemented? Are any additional resources required?
- Please provide a brief timeline of the implementation phase.
- How will a successful implementation be measured? Which performance indicators are most relevant?

Implementation: Will be achieved via a restructure following a full consultation exercise. Additional resources will be required from HR.

Timelines: For realisation of full savings, consultation needs to commence on time so notice periods can be worked out before the new financial year.

Success: Will be measured by there remaining a fully functioning, value for money Legal Service which can still assist in delivering the Council's Borough Plan objectives, priorities and outcomes.

Impact / non-financial benefits and disbenefits

What is the likely impact on customers and how will negative impacts be mitigated or managed?

List both positive and negative impacts. Where possible link these to outcomes (please refer to relevant Borough Plan 2019-23 objectives and outcomes)

Positive Impacts

There would be a reduction in the cost of providing a Legal Service.

Negative Impacts

The deletion of posts within the Legal Service could impact the current delivery and workload, resulting in some staff taking on more administrative duties, which would mean that there would be less internal resource available and the potential of more use being made of the London Boroughs' Legal Alliance Framework (a collaborative partnership of local authority legal teams which came together to procure best value service from private sector barristers who have been accepted on the Framework), if the in-house service is unable to provide a service at any point following the reduction.

What is the impact on businesses, members, staff, partners and other stakeholders and how will this be mitigated or managed? How has this been discussed / agreed with other parties affected?
List both positive and negative impacts.

Positive Impacts

Reduced establishment costs generating required savings.

Negative Impacts

For corporate legal work there may be an increased reliance on the need to access the legal framework of solicitors and barristers in order to cater for peaks in demand / a loss of knowledge and experience.

Loss of support staff might lead to legal officers spending more time on non-legal matters and this could increase the cost to internal clients and increase workload to legal staff.

How does this option ensure the Council is able to meet **statutory requirements**?

This proposal does not affect the discharge of the Council's statutory duties.

Risks and Mitigation

What are the main risks associated with this option and how could they be mitigated?(Add rows if required)

Risk	Impact (H/M/L)	Probability (H/M/L)	Mitigation
Work may not be managed in-house and advice will not be provided in the timeframe it is required	H	M	Use of the legal solicitor/barrister frameworks / recruit agency locum staff
Clients may not manage within the reduced legal budget	M	M	The current proposal will only have a small budgetary impact on clients as the support staff cuts will not affect client budgets, and much of the corporate work is not client specific.
Legal officers may not have the skills and capacity to undertake some administrative tasks.	L	M	Administrative staff will still be available to offer support and train legal officers when required. Processes will be reviewed and made less cumbersome where possible to reduce number and complexity of administrative processes.

Has the EqIA Screening Tool been completed for this proposal? The Screening Tool should be completed for all Options at Stage 1. EqIA Screening Tool	No
Is a full EqIA required? Full EqIAs to be undertaken at Stage 2	Possibly if the proposal is implemented

Reviewed by		
Director / AD		Have seen and commented on the proposal
Bernie Ryan	Signature:	Bernie Ryan
	Date:	07/06/2020
Finance Business Partner		[Comments]
Alex Altman	Signature:	Alex Altman
	Date:	07/06/2020