

Leader's Portfolio Briefing Overview and Scrutiny

The Leader's portfolio covers the areas highlighted in this briefing paper for Overview and Scrutiny's consideration.

1 HUMAN RESOURCES

Voluntary Redundancy

The budget shortfall for 2011/12 necessitates an unavoidable reduction in staff of upwards of 1000 posts. The Council introduced a voluntary redundancy scheme to minimise the need for compulsory redundancies. We have approved just over 260 voluntary redundancies applications, with a further 40 expected to be approved shortly.

Recruitment controls

The recruitment freeze was introduced in early summer 2010 to help reduce expenditure on staff salaries. A post may be advertised internally, but external adverts have only been released for essential frontline posts such as social workers. This has reduced recruitment advertising levels from approx. 310 to 22 advertisements per year.

Progress on discretionary spend

An exercise was undertaken jointly with the Finance team to highlight to managers the level of discretionary expenditure on paybill items such as honoraria payments and overtime, with a view to reducing this. This has proven successful with a reduction at January 2011 of expenditure each month by approx £250k since April 2010.

Consultants

The use of consultants and interim managers is regularly monitored. The last monitoring period from Jun - Nov 2010 showed a reduction in consultants employed by the Council from 82 to 54, and a reduction in Revenue funded consultants from 33 to 16.

Agency staff

Managers have been regularly reviewing the numbers of agency staff, as well as supplier and hiring rates. The number of agency staff has reduced by 280 workers from Apr 2010 to Jan 2011, and we have reduced the cost by approx £675k per month.

2 ORGANISATIONAL DEVELOPMENT & LEARNING

OD & L are supporting the Council in responding to the major challenges facing us as we become a significantly leaner and smaller organisation. To this end OD have:

- Designed and are currently delivering the Supporting Change programme to prepare staff for the changes ahead. The programme comprises workshops, briefings and e-learning modules covering everything from CV Writing to Managing Teams in times of Change to Achieving with Less.
- Delivered two rounds of Face to Face briefing sessions, hosted by the Chief Executive, for over 1,000 managers to hear about and think through the changes ahead and the Rethinking Haringey proposals.
- Launched a staff suggestion scheme for ideas on improvement, efficiency and change, which to date has received over 250 suggestions. In December we also launched the Chief Executive's Blog.
- Re-tendered our contracts for learning and development programmes. The number of courses has been reduced because of cost saving measures, but those that have run have been highly rated by participants.

- Planned and delivered change support to a number of areas facing major transformation – including children’s services; strategic and community housing; and those subject to support function review i.e financial management, procurement, policy and performance.
- Worked alongside managers to implement smart working arrangements in 11 services. The goal is to deliver savings and create a leaner, more flexible, and skilled ‘fit for the future’ workforce focused on outcomes that meet community needs.

3 COMMUNICATIONS

Media & PR

The team continues to handle the balance of media coverage surrounding the Tottenham Hotspurs stadium.

As the impact of Government cuts start to hit home harder to people amidst misinformation about how Councils are handling the issue, our emphasis will be on commitment to service provision and support for our residents.

Web

The Council’s website is being refreshed to stimulate greater information access and use of online services. This work is vital to enable the Council to help residents with this proposed channel shift. The team is working closely in conjunction with the design team and ITC to find cost effective solutions for these changes.

Marketing communications

Work continues to get the Council’s first ever fully-costed annual publicity plan in place for 2011/12. This will ensure that the 2011/12 print and design bill of up to £500k compared with up to £3m in previous years will achieve maximum value when informing residents of their rights and responsibilities in support of service delivery.

Consultation

Having completed the Council’s ambitious conversation with residents about how their money is spent in “Shaping the Future”, the unit is helping services to consult on the future of adult services and children’s centres. The next round of the annual survey of residents is under way and will be similarly central to tuning service provision.

4 POLICY & PERFORMANCE

Sustainable Community Strategy (SCS)

A refresh of the SCS and the Council’s 6 key strategies is being undertaken to incorporate national and local policy developments. This will involve close consultation across the HSP and its theme boards, and a detailed impact assessment. Following Government guidance on partnership working, the team is preparing proposals to streamline the HSP and its sub groups.

Departmental Plans and Council Plan

The team is working with services to produce departmental plans setting out the key activities to be delivered for 2011/12. These will form the basis of the Council Plan.

Implementation of the NHS and Public Health White Paper

The policy team has prepared discussion papers for the implementation of the NHS and Public Health White Papers, including:

- Setting up a shadow Health & Wellbeing Board to oversee the commissioning health, social care and public health activities;
- Project managing transfer of the public health function to the Council by Mar 2011.

Disability Equality Scheme

The team is consulting on the Disability Equality Scheme in order to continue with formulating policy for improving service accessibility, and to incorporate changes resulting from the Equality Act 2010. A consultation event, in partnership with the Haringey Disability First Consortium, was held on 15 February.

Equal Opportunity Policy

The team is updating the Equality Policy in line with the Equality Act 2010, on which consultation will take place in the spring. We are also preparing for the publication of equalities data so that the Council complies with the requirements of the Act.

Complaints and Member Enquiries Review

The team has reviewed and streamlined the Feedback procedures so that it is easier for residents to give us their views, and to improve the way we deal with complaints.

5 LEGAL SERVICES

Employment Team

The employment team continue to advise departments of the Council on employment issues consequent on the internal changes necessitated by the impending cuts.

Debt Recovery

The team is active in recovering debts owing to the Council and one officer recovered approx. £520k of fees in the Adult Social Care arena. Other legal officers recovered a further £346k this financial year, mainly from commercial rent arrears.

Introductory Tenancies

Lawyers based in the Housing Section of the Legal Services department are advising Homes for Haringey on introductory tenancies which come into force in April 2011.

Corporate

Legal have provided advice to reference group carrying out the Governance Review and subsequently regarding the constitutional changes that will be necessary.

Commercial Section

Legal services have been heavily involved in advising on the Spurs s106 Agreement and the Spurs CPO Indemnity Agreement which are ready for execution.

The contracts team have been giving extensive advice to clients working with grants to the voluntary sector, and also gave evidence to the Law Commission on Public Highways and Level Crossings on Monday 10th January 2011.

Social Care Division

The team is managing 153 social care proceedings which is an increase of 26 cases from Apr 2010. There has been a significant increase in the number of community care judicial review cases that lawyers are dealing with.

Monitoring Officer

The Monitoring Officer is advising the Standards Committee on:

- the processing of outstanding complaints and investigations;
- the impact of the Government's Localism Bill on the Standards Committee's role.