

Resources Portfolio Update

Key Issues/Priorities Overview and Scrutiny – July 2008

Audit and Risk

Risk management. During 2007/08, we revised the council's risk management framework to enable the council to demonstrate a corporate and consistent approach in all areas where risk needs to be effectively managed; including risk registers, project management, health and safety, business continuity planning and performance management and this was agreed by the Audit Committee in May 2008. We have now also agreed a risk management framework for the Haringey Strategic Partnership which will be implemented during 2008/09. We have developed this approach independently and hope to have it recognised as best practice by the Use of Resources assessment.

London Authorities Mutual Ltd. The council has joined the London Authorities Mutual Ltd as a full member from April 2008. We have been working as part of the Steering Group during 2007/08 to ensure that the anticipated savings were realised in substantially reduced insurance premiums for the council in 2008/09. Although LAML is subject to an ongoing external challenge, we have a contract in place which will continue to deliver value for money for the council. We will continue to work with LAML and the other London Boroughs who are also LAML members to resolve the legal challenge.

Internal audit contract. At the start of 2007/08, we re-let the council's contract for the delivery of internal audit services in order to improve the quality and performance of the service to all departments. The contract is now output based, focusing on delivery of the final audit reports and advice to clients and it has been successful in its first year of operation in delivering increased performance and improved completion rates for audit projects.

Business and Local Taxation (BLT)

Benefit take-up. As part of the Council's approach to addressing Child Poverty, BLT are finalising the arrangements for benefit take up activity during the forthcoming months.

In partnership with Children's and Young People's Service, BLT staff will be visiting three large schools in the borough to pilot take up surgeries. The proposed schools for the pilot are Devonshire Hill, Chestnuts and Noel Park. We are beginning discussion with those schools to make the necessary arrangements for the days. These activities will take place in September, once the schools resume after the summer break.

In addition to this, BLT staff will also be attending six Access Service events across the year, giving HB/CTB and general welfare benefit advice. BLT will use mobile PC's (tablets) to calculate entitlement to benefits. Two of the six events have already been finalised. These are:

Saturday 30th August - Polish and new European Migrants (with a focus on families)

Venue – Chestnut Park (in conjunction with cultural/fun day planned by local Polish community group – Razem)

Focus – benefits and education, including adult training.

Key agencies that will be invited are Libraries, Benefits, CONEL, Job centre, NHS, voluntary sector and the Children's Services

Thursday 2nd October 12-3 Greek and Turkish (with a focus on the elderly)

Venue – Cypriot Centre or Woodside House

Focus – pensioner poverty and health

Key agencies to be invited are Age Concern, Benefits, NHS, CAB, Social Services, Recreation, Leisure, Libraries, Police, voluntary sector groups, i.e. luncheon clubs and befriending)

BLT staff will also be in attendance at the following events – car free day in Wood Green High Road, Employment Day, Haringey Forum for older People and Area Assemblies which are planned for September.

New national benefit PIs. The two new national benefit indicators are up and running. These are NI 180 – Changes in HB/CTB entitlements identified within the year and NI 181 - Time taken to action new claims and changes (combined). BLT have a comprehensive action plan in place to ensure that claimants are encouraged to report their changes of circumstances as quickly as possible and we are proactively ensuring that we identify any possible changes to entitlement before they are reported by the claimant. We have been working in partnership with the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) Performance Development Team to ensure that we achieve our target of 40,000 changes to identify during 2008/2009.

Performance information on these two PIs is produced by the DWP using data we supply, they are only just in a position to start to be able to process this data – so to date it has not been possible to measure this indicator for 2008/09.

Partnership with Royal Mail. BLT have entered into a pilot partnership working agreement with the Royal Mail to provide additional outlets for benefit claimants to provide information about their benefit claims to the Council. The three month pilot exercise will commence on the 11th August 2008 and will enable benefit claimants living in the N22, N15 and N17 areas to hand in evidence to support their benefit claim or information relating to changes in their circumstances to any one of twelve Post Offices in these areas.

Partnership with RSLs. The DWP launched a scheme where Registered Social Landlords (RSL's) could verify documents to support HB/CTB claims.

Stadium Housing Association have been a verifying partner for Haringey since September 2007 and BLT are in the process of completing VF partnership agreements with two large RSL's in Haringey - Sanctuary Housing Association and Circle Anglia Housing Association.

Homeworking pilot. The BLT home working pilot has completed and was an outstanding success. Review workshops have been held and some of the many benefits identified included

- Productivity increased for all staff taking part
- Average sickness for the pilot workers reduced from 11 days to 2 days
- Stress levels reduced through less commuting and more flexible working hours
- Financial savings for staff including:
 - from travel costs, childminder fees
 - General expenses – less spent on lunch etc.
 - Able to benefit from discounts and low-cost options for off peak memberships such as gym memberships)

BLT now plan to roll out home working to a further 50 staff. Within the same project, BLT will implement a desk share policy. This project will run in conjunction with the overall SMART working programme.

NNDR Shared Service. BLT are continuing to progress the NNDR Shared Service Project. The councils who will be part of the shared service are Islington, Tower Hamlets and Haringey. Haringey is leading the project.

Corporate Procurement

Supplies and services. The Contract for the Host organisation to establish a LINK (Local Involvement Network) was awarded from 1st July 2008 to the Shaw Trust.

The Supplies and Services team attended a Meet the Buyer event at Alexandra Palace on 19th June organised by the North London Chamber of Commerce. Local small to medium sized enterprises attended and were given an insight into how to do business with the Council.

A rail travel pilot has been implemented in Children's and Young People's Service, streamlining the purchasing of rail tickets. If successful this will be rolled out across the Council.

Procurement team are making it a requirement that all payments to commercial suppliers (new & old) over £5k (previously £10k) are paid by bank transfer and where identifiable obtaining bank details from suppliers irrespective of payment value so increasing the number of electronic transactions.

Corporate Property Services

Accommodation Strategy/SMART working. The Accommodation Strategy is being implemented to realise further financial efficiencies, improve working environments and support SMART working. Work is currently underway to assess the cost/benefit of accelerating the programme in order that some key sites can be released to support social and physical regeneration of the borough including contributing to housing supply targets and help the Council deliver targets to reduce CO2 emissions. The revised plan and business case will be considered by Cabinet later in the year including a building disposal schedule.

Key disposal/Redevelopment projects progress. The service is currently developing a large number of strategic sites and major disposals aimed at supporting the social, economic and physical regeneration of the borough as well as realise capital receipts for the Council. In addition to those schemes being pursued with development partners (Hornsey Town Hall, Tottenham Town Hall, Hornsey Depot) the service is now progressing new schemes that are being scoped and will be marketed as appropriate .

Community buildings. Following the joint building inspections of the community buildings managed corporately the service is systematically addressing the maintenance, compliance and landlord & tenant matters. A number of specific historical issues relating to occupation, urgent building condition and suitability matters are also being addressed jointly with the voluntary sector team and other services.

Income generation – effects of the economy. The service is experiencing some effects of the slowing down of the property market and down-turn in the economy. Already the number of Right To Buy house sales has dramatically reduced and other disposals are likely to be harder to achieve in terms of value and/or timescales.

Corporate Management of Property (CMP). The programme of considering further Council operational service buildings being incorporated within corporate landlord management is currently being reviewed along with the further consolidation of the building maintenance procurement through a single arrangement for planned and reactive services.

Considerable progress has been made this year in delivering a number of major projects on the maintenance capital programme, addressing the backlog of high priority repairs. Significant progress has also been achieved in addressing legal compliance issues to ensure our buildings are safe and fit for use.

IT

Projects/Initiatives. IT has been working with service departments, through the Corporate Prioritisation Board, to ensure that the scope and benefits of the IT Capital Programme are aligned to our business drivers and priorities. Project Requests, outlining specific project proposals with benefits aligned to the Achieving Excellence categories of Performance, Perception and Efficiencies were developed by the business in conjunction with the IT Business Partners and where appropriate, full business cases have also been developed for consideration.

Recent project deliveries include the launch of the SAP CRM system within Customer Services. During 2008/9 we will extend both the functionality and breadth of the user base. The investment in SAP will also be further leveraged as we look to introduce Asset Management later this year.

IT Service provided support and technical consultancy to Homes for Haringey, enabling them to establish a fully operational call centre. This exercise was followed by a Value for Money assessment of IT Services by HfH and the results will be considered by HfH's Board shortly.

IT Services have participated in the SOCITM (Society of IT Management) benchmarking exercise for seven years, along with 18 other London Boroughs. In last year's benchmarking SOCITM confirmed that Haringey has a more resilient environment compared to the other London boroughs. The exercise is valuable to IT as the results, and the comparisons given against the other boroughs, are reviewed to identify value for money or areas for service/performance improvements. The results also recognise achievements made and IT have received many indicators of good practice over the years e.g cost of workstations and cost of laptops The submission for 2008 benchmarking exercise has just been returned and the results are due by the end of the calendar year.

Corporate Finance

Closure of the 2007/08 Accounts. The Statement of Accounts was approved at General Purposes Committee on 26th June 2008.

2009/10 budget process. We have commenced the 2009/10 budget process. Pre Business Plan Reviews are planned to be distributed to Directors and Heads of Service before the end of July after Cabinet have considered the financial planning report.

External audit. Grant Thornton started their external audit of the accounts on 7th July along with their assessment of the CPA Use of Resources information. We are meeting weekly with the auditors to review progress.

Bank contract. The new bank contract awarded to Royal Bank of Scotland/NatWest is now almost completely operational.

SAP Asset Management module. The implementation of the Asset Management module of SAP is due to commence soon. Once up and running this will significantly improve our management information on our assets and ensure we can provide the accounting information required in the 2007 SORP (Statement of Recommended Practice)

HR and OD&L

2007/8 successes

HR = Equal Pay – local union agreement and compensation payments to all manual workers
OD = liP re-recognition

Key issues for 2008/9

HR = Equal pay & Single status implementation including employment package review;
Flexible staff/ working deployment; Employment procedure reviews
OD = People Strategy inc Mgt Standards, upward appraisals and staff survey

Key business priorities and how they relate to One council working and Haringey's Local Area Agreement.

Employment environment to enable an excellent org, with effectively managed, led and developed staff

- People Strategy – inc activity to maintain an organisational culture of learning and success driven by our values of service, integrity, improvement, passion and working together as one council
- Investor in people status – sustain first-rate people and service performance
- Equal Pay & Single Status implementation including review of employment package and staff benefits
- Review various employment procedures (grievance, capability, redundancy and redeployment, pensions)
- Employee development programmes including Aiming High, leadership programmes, employee induction, customer focus
- Internal communication strategy and co-ordination
- Effective Member/ Officer working (development, constitution, briefings)
- Staff survey and events

Improve the way people work through support & challenge

- Use the People Plans to inform HR/OD work plans
- Use the new performance cycles to address trends
- Support Achieving Excellence, especially Smart Working & the Operating Model, inc change management
- Deliver the Management standards and Upward appraisal

Focus our resources to a sustainable improvement to Council performance

- HR/OD operating model including internal shared services & opportunities for partnering
- Develop management standards
- Deploy resources to Impact groups as identified by greatest need
- Deploy a project on SAP ESS/MSS
- Capacity growth for effective Member / Officer working (our staff)

PI's for 2008/9 =

		Eng Average	Lon Average	2006/07	2007/08 As at Feb08	2007/08	2008/09	2009/10
BV11a	% of top 5% of earners who are women	33.1	37.33	54.2	53%	50%	50%	50%
BV 11b	% of top 5% of earners from ethnic minority communities	3.29	5.98	18.16%	19%	26%	22%	25%
BV 11c	% of top 5% of earners declaring they meet the Disability Discrimination Act disability definition	3.63	1.94	2.18%	2.9%	4.90%	3.5%	3.8%

BV 12	The no. of working days/shifts lost due to sickness absence per FTE employee.	9.44	9.53	9.14	9.6	8.8	8.8 (stretch target 8.5 days)	8.5
BV 16a	% of staff declaring they meet the Disability Discrimination Act disability definition	3.55	2.38	3.56%	6.6%	4.89%	4.89%	4.89%
BV 17a	% of staff from minority ethnic communities	5.2	16.3	44.94%	45.7%	39.90%	39.30%	39.30%
Staff Survey	Percentage of staff who understand Haringey Council's aims and objectives			90%			90%	
Staff Survey	Percentage of staff who believe that the way we do things keeps on improving			68%			79%	
SAP records	Appraisal completion				82%		95%	

Sickness Absence. The Council's annual sickness rate (based on a rolling year of the last 12 months) is 9.4 days. This time last year it was 10.4 days. If we stay on this trend it will be under the 8.8 day target at year end. I have brought focus to bear on actions by management and monitored the progress to ensure we continue to improve performance in this critical area.

Use of Agency staffing. In May the Council engaged 625 agency staff (FTE). This represents a 70%+ reduction since the high usage of a couple of years ago. I have managed to sustain this reduction by careful monitoring of the use of our managed service contract. At the same time cashable savings have been accrued by top slicing the profit margin of the suppliers. This has no effect on the pay rates of the temps, it just means that we have driven a harder bargain with the supplier companies. We exceeded our savings target for 2007/8 bringing £1million to the general budget. This year I have turned my attention to the use of long term temps. An exercise is ongoing to reduce our reliance on such temps.

Consultants. The Council has 39 consultants on its books. I have arranged for a business case to be provided for each one. I have instructed that Directors discuss the use of consultants with their Cabinet Members to ensure that we are fully involved. Whilst we all appreciate that expertise is sometimes needed from outside the Council, I will further reduce the duration of consultants as the year progresses.