
Decision Maker: Improvement and Efficiency Sub-Committee

Date: 6th July 2011

Decision Type: Non-Urgent Non-Executive Non-Key

Title: **ORGANISATIONAL IMPROVEMENT PROGRAMME UPDATE**

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Chief Officer: Doug Patterson, Chief Executive

Ward: Borough-wide

1. Reason for report

1.1 To update Members on the progress of the Organisational Improvement Programme.

2. **RECOMMENDATION(S)**

2.2 Note the progress made to date on projects led by the Organisational Improvement Team

Corporate Policy

1. Policy Status: Existing policy.
 2. BBB Priority: Excellent Council.
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Financial

1. Cost of proposal: N/A No additional costs at this stage
 2. Ongoing costs: N/A. Opportunity cost of Organisational Improvement Team. No additional ongoing costs at this stage. Any business cases for future projects will include ongoing costs.
 3. Budget head/performance centre: Organisational Improvement Team
 4. Total current budget for this head: £328
 5. Source of funding: Existing revenue budgets
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Staff

1. Number of staff (current and additional): 5 FTE
 2. If from existing staff resources, number of staff hours:
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Legal

1. Legal Requirement: Non-statutory - Government guidance.
 2. Call-in: Call-in is applicable
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Customer Impact

1. Estimated number of users/beneficiaries (current and projected): Beneficiaries will be identified as part of business cases developed through the programme. Potentially all customers and staff are beneficiaries of this improvement programme.
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Ward Councillor Views

1. Have Ward Councillors been asked for comments? N/A.
2. Summary of Ward Councillors comments: N/A

3. COMMENTARY

- 3.1 Since last reporting to I&E Sub-Committee, several of the projects within the programme have progressed significantly.
- 3.2 More detail on the precise progress, risks, issues and planned work is shown in the Programme Highlight report in Appendix 1. A very brief summary of the major workstreams' progress is given below for convenience.

Civic centre accommodation

- 3.3 Work on refurbishing North Block has commenced and teams from ESD have vacated into Ann Springman, St Blaise, the Old Palace and Rochester.
- 3.4 The operational group, set up to consider the design of receptions and interview rooms in ground floor Stockwell and North Block has proposed decisions on layout and security features that have been agreed by Chief Officers.
- 3.5 The agreed Records and Retention Policy, which states that generally information, both hard copy and electronic, will only be kept for as long as legally required, is now being implemented with files being boxed and moved into storage with TNT where the criteria are met. A process to allow for exceptions to this policy has been built into the process of implementation.
- 3.6 The decant location of the Director of Environment remains to be resolved. The issue is being tackled by the Head of I,E&E and the Chief Executive as a matter of urgency to avoid any delays to the works in North Block, which have already commenced.

Shared Services

- 3.7 The Shared Services Board, comprised of the Chief Executives and one other Chief Officer from Bromley, Bexley and Croydon, last met on 22 June to update on the project list and to agree areas which could benefit from added momentum from Board level.
- 3.8 The next meeting of the three Leaders and Chief Executives from Bromley, Bexley and Croydon is scheduled for 8 July where a shortlist of projects which are considered to have the highest opportunity, as well as the long-list of projects, will be presented.
- 3.9 Proposals for shared management of the Library service across Bexley and Bromley have been agreed by Members in both boroughs resulting in savings of up to £400k p.a. Appointment of new posts is expected to start in September 2011 with a view to the new structure being complete by April 2012. Proposals for a Libraries Trust between the two boroughs are also being considered.
- 3.10 A workshop on Property was hosted by the Finance Director, Bromley, involving representatives from all three boroughs to scope out opportunities around Facilities Management and Asset Management.
- 3.11 The Chief Executive, Bromley, has led two workshops involving all three boroughs around opportunities for selling services to schools, including consideration of the market across the three boroughs for selling services, and whether one borough is more established than another for doing this. Other services such as SEN, Transport, Quality Assurance and School Improvements have also been considered at the meetings.
- 3.12 The Organisational Improvement Team has agreed to lead, on behalf of all three boroughs, a scoping exercise considering the possibilities of a shared Customer Contact Centre, including outsourcing, with a view to feeding back on initial findings in September 2011.

- 3.13 Departments are also encouraged to take forward opportunities for shared services which will be tracked by the Shared Services Board and fed through the OIP Board. The Head of Health and Safety is in discussions with Bexley around the Occupational Health Physician post, shared three-way between Croydon, Bexley and Bromley, which could result in savings of between £20k-25k p.a..
- 3.13 The Organisational Improvement Team will continue to drive the shared services work, in particular the shortlisted projects, as well as ensuring that projects are progressing between meetings of the Shared Services Board and that as many opportunities as possible are being identified.

Regulatory Services

- 3.14 Regulatory Services is one of the shared services workstreams that is being progressed by the Organisational Improvement Team on behalf of the Bexley, Bromley and Croydon. This work is being undertaken in place of the proposal by one of the partner boroughs to commission this work from a private consultancy at a cost of £90,000.
- 3.15 The agreed project plan set out a list of regulatory services as a starting point for discussion which included: Building Control, Planning Enforcement, Land Charges, Environmental Health, Trading Standards, Pollution Control, Community Safety, Emergency Planning, Travellers site management and Housing Services.
- 3.16 The Organisational Improvement Team have collated service information from leads across all three boroughs and the group have met regularly to discuss opportunity areas.
- 3.17 The report with high-level findings, options and opportunities will be agreed by the project group and then by Environment Directors at the end of June with a view to presenting the headline findings at the Leaders and Chief Executives' meeting on 8th July.
- 3.18 If commissioned, the second phase of this project will be an options appraisal of the shortlist based on more in-depth conversations with senior staff from relevant service areas.

Web upgrade

- 3.19 The new website went live on 13th April on time and on budget. This marks the end of Phase 1 and the Organisational Improvement Team's involvement in the project

Customer Contact Centre service migration

- 3.20 Training of CCC staff took place during the last week of May and the Landscape helpdesk was successfully migrated into the CCC on 7th June.
- 3.21 The Registrars Service has been using the Solidus Call System to analyse its call volume and pattern in greater detail over a 3 week period. The analysis of these calls will inform, with greater certainty, the number of agents that will be required in the CCC to handle the Registrars calls that have been agreed to migrate.
- 3.22 The Registrars team were successfully trained on the e-bookings system which is now set up. A meeting is scheduled for 11/7 with Capita, I.S. and the Registrars manager to agree a go-live date for the new system.
- 3.23 School admissions calls were routed through the Solidus Call System over a two week period to analyse the service's call patterns in more detail. Further work is by the OIP team is ongoing to look at the service's business processes as part of building a business case for potential migration to the CCC.

- 3.24 Tell Us Once (TUO), the service allowing customers who are registering a death to inform several Council and Government departments at once has encountered delays due to IT problems at a national level.
- 3.25 Department of Work and Pensions (DWP), who are rolling out the TUO service nationally, are currently unable to say when the issue will be resolved. In light of this, the Project Manager in Bromley has agreed with the service area that it is more prudent to wait until September, after the summer peak for the Registrars service, to implement the system.

Voice recognition

- 3.26 Phase 1 of the Voice Recognition (VR) project for internal use across the Council is complete and is used with great success by Members and Officers alike with an average of 600 calls being made to the system every day and a success rate of 80%.
- 3.27 Phase 2 – expanding the VR switchboard function for external use by members of the public went live in May with the system handling over 2,000 calls a day and 70% of all calls being handled by the automated operator.
- 3.28 The Project Manager is updating and amending the content of the VR database on a daily basis, as feedback is received. Analysis is also being carried out to assess whether additional call agents may be required to prevent calls dropping through to the human operator.
- 3.29 Phase 3 of the project is around simple requests with high volumes, specifically, reporting missed bins and requesting a new recycling box.
- 3.30 Development work by the IS team is ongoing around phase 3 of the project to ensure the Telephonetics software can interact with the CRM system and thereby provide genuine 'end to end' self service.
- 3.31 Testing of Phase 3 VR will commence as soon as the new e-forms for missed bins and requesting recycling boxes.

Organisational Design

- 3.32 As an inevitable consequence of the financial challenges the organisation faces, the structure of the organisation needs consideration and scrutiny and this work is being taken forward with Members by the Chief Executive directly. This will include a review of management grades across the organisation to further ensure our structure is as efficient and effective as possible and aligned to Members' objectives.
- 3.33 Further efficiencies are proposed to be achieved through the centralisation/rationalisation of support services currently sitting within service departments.

4 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 Although it is not possible to provide specifics the nature and scope of the programme will be likely to have an impact on existing policies such as HR.

5 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

5.1 As the business cases for these projects will/have been largely making the case for investment on an 'invest to save' basis and to be funded through 'capital', efficiency savings achieved through capital investments will mean changes and longer term savings to current revenue spend.

6 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

6.1 No obvious legal implications at this stage

7 PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

7.1 All the projects mentioned above will have personnel implications as we continue to move towards a well skilled but smaller workforce.

Non-Applicable Sections:	
Background Documents: (Access via Contact Officer)	