

LONDON BOROUGH OF HARROW

Agenda Item: **11**

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Meeting:	Employees' Consultative Forum
Date:	Tuesday, 8 th July 2003
Subject:	Working Draft Improvement Plan in response to the Comprehensive Performance Assessment and IDeA Peer Review - Priority 9 (Human Resources Strategy)
Key decision:	No
Responsible Chief Officer:	Chief Executive and Executive Director Organisational Development
Relevant Portfolio Holders:	Portfolio Holder For Finance And Human Resources
Status:	Part 1
Ward:	N/A
Enclosures:	Appendix 1 – Extract from Cabinet Report on Working Draft Improvement Plan in response to the Comprehensive Performance Assessment and IDeA Peer Review, 18 March 2003. Appendix 2 – Harrow HR Strategy Project Outline

1. Summary

- 1.1 This report details the progress against Priority 9 (Human Resources Strategy) of the Working Draft Improvement Plan in response to the Comprehensive Performance Assessment and IDeA Peer Review, agreed by Cabinet.

2. Recommendations (For Decision by the Forum)

- 2.1 That the Forum notes the progress made against Priority 9 (Human Resources Strategy) of the Working Draft Improvement Plan in response to the Comprehensive Performance Assessment and IDeA Peer Review agreed by Cabinet and the revised timescale for development of a HR Strategy.

Reason: An improvement plan is needed as part of the process for the IDeA Review and the Audit Commission expects Councils to draw up their priorities for further action in response to the Comprehensive Performance Assessment

The 'Improvement Plan' requires that the Organisational Development Directorate report progress on a quarterly basis to the Employees' Consultative Forum.

3. Consultation with Ward Councillors

- 3.1 N/A

4. Policy Context (Including Relevant Previous Decisions)

- 4.1 This report complies with the 'Improvement Plan' requirement to report progress against Priority 9 (Human Resources Strategy) to the Employees' Consultative Forum, as agreed by Cabinet.

5. Relevance to Corporate Priorities

- 5.1 The 'Improvement Plan' is relevant to all corporate priorities as it helps support the changes and improvements being made in front line services as part of the New Harrow Project. It is also needed as part of the process for the IDeA Review and the Audit Commission expects Councils to draw up their priorities for further action in response to the Comprehensive Performance Assessment
- 5.2 Priority 9 of the 'Improvement Plan' deals with the development of an effective, motivated and well-trained workforce equipped to work in a changed organisation. This involves aligning the Human Resources Strategy with other changes through, amongst other things, the New Harrow Project and includes the development of staff skills for innovating, challenging the status quo and responding to change.

6. Background Information

- 6.1 Priority 9 (Human Resources Strategy) identifies that the following changes will result from the 'Improvement Plan':
- The Council will have an effective, motivated and well trained workforce, that is supported by HR policies and practices designed to reinforce the changes required by NHP.
 - There will be reduced sickness absence across the authority.
- 6.2 The 'Improvement Plan' also lists the tasks i.e. the major activities, which need to be carried out and areas for further development at the end of 2003. The tasks,

with timescales and an update on progress made against them are detailed in table 1 below.

7. Progress Update on Tasks

7.1 Table 1.0 details the progress made against the tasks identified in the 'Improvement Plan'.

Table 1.0

TASKS	DATES	PROGRESS
Commission bi-annual staff attitude survey	Initial Survey to be undertaken in 2003-4 and thereafter every 2 years	Discussions are currently taking place to commission a staff survey based on a format which will enable benchmarking against other London Boroughs. A project outline is being developed and it will aim to achieve completion of the survey by Dec 2003.
Programme of measures to address sickness absence	Currently underway, with report to cabinet 2002 proposing programme of actions to begin in March 2003.	Improved monitoring and management of absence resulted in the number of working days per employee lost due to sickness falling from 10.65 to 9.98 in 2002-03 (BVPI 12). The programme of measures is ongoing and Marsh Consultants have been engaged to undertake an audit and review of current Council policies and practices. A 'desk top' review of relevant policies and procedures was undertaken in March, followed in April by meetings with key stakeholders including representatives from the trade unions and Occupational Health Service. The information gained from these interviews formed the basis for a series of focus groups held in June involving managers and staff from all services. Marsh are due to report back with their findings in early July 03.

Review current management competencies and management development programme	Review to be instigated from April 2003, based on vision and values referred to in Key Priority 2	Analysis of the results from the development centres using the current competencies has been completed and key areas for improvement have been identified. A review of the current Certificate in Management programme has also been completed and options for change identified. Revised competencies and management development programme will be implemented from Feb 2004.
Develop Human Resources Strategy incorporating vision and values (Key Priority 2) and the need to bring about organisational change as part of the New Harrow Project	Begin in April 2003 with completion by September 2003	A Project Outline for developing a HR Strategy has been agreed and is attached at appendix 2. In order to facilitate meaningful consultation, the target date for completion has been revised. Consultation workshops for key partners and stakeholders are scheduled for 18 July and the final Strategy will be reported for Cabinet approval in Jan 2004.

8. Areas for Further Development at End of 2003

- 8.1 The 'Improvement Plan' identifies the need to audit and re-write 6 key policies - Recruitment and Retention, Grievance, Disciplinary Procedure, Performance Management, Absence and Training & Development as areas for further development at the end of 2003.
- 8.2 Preparatory work for reviewing both the Grievance and Disciplinary Procedures was undertaken last year at a joint workshop with UNISON facilitated by ACAS. The outputs from the workshop will be included in the audit of these policies. Initial work on the audit is expected to start around October 2003.
- 8.3 UNISON and representatives of Harrow Teachers Consultative Committee will be fully consulted on the audit and development of these policies and procedures.

9. Consultation

- 9.1 Priority 9 (Human Resources Strategy) of the 'Improvement Plan' was considered by Unison and representatives of Harrow Teachers Consultative Committee at the Corporate Joint Committees on 26 March and 24 June 2003.
- 9.2 Further consultation with the trade unions on progress against the tasks identified in the 'Improvement Plan' will take place at all key stages.
- 9.3 Consultation arrangements for the HR strategy are set out within the Project Outline attached at appendix 2.

9.4 Consultation with the trade unions on auditing and re-writing the 6 key policies identified under 'Areas for Further Development At the End of 2003' will be undertaken via the Corporate Joint Committee.

10. Finance Observations

10.1 These are incorporated within the report to Cabinet.

11. Legal Observations

11.1 These are incorporated within the report to Cabinet

12. Conclusion

12.1 Progress has been made against all the tasks identified under Priority 9 (Human Resources Strategy) of the 'Improvement Plan' and, with the exception of the HR Strategy, all tasks are scheduled to complete in accordance with the original timescales. Development of the HR Strategy is scheduled to be completed in accordance with the revised timescale.

13. Background Papers

13.1 Cabinet Report on the Improvement Plan for IDeA Review and Comprehensive Performance Assessment - December 2002.

13.2 Cabinet Report on the amended Improvement Plan for IDeA Review and Comprehensive Performance Assessment - March 2003

14. Author

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