

Maximising the effectiveness of procurement

Project sponsor: Myfanwy Barrett

Project managers: David Ward and Greg Foley

Project objective: To maximise the effectiveness of the council's procurement spend

Date by which the project will be concluded: December 2009

First milestone and date by which it will be achieved: Utilising the ERP system to more effectively control procurement across the council and rationalise the number of vendors the authority purchases from – June 2008

Second milestone and date by which it will be achieved: Identify the potential savings that could be achieved in 2008/09 through a 'quick procurement wins' project – July 2008

Third milestone and date by which it will be achieved: Strengthened corporate procurement team in place – October 2008

Fourth milestone and date by which it will be achieved: Identify the potential savings that could be achieved through more effective procurement across the council and set appropriate targets for the financial years 2009/10 and 2010/11 – July 2009

Fifth milestone and date by which it will be achieved: Review the council's approach to procurement to ensure it is adequately positioned to fulfil the agreed targets for 2009/10 and 2010/11 – December 2009

Maximising income to the council

Project sponsor: Michael Lockwood

Project manager: Myfanwy Barrett

Project objective: To maximise the council's income

Date by which the project will be concluded: October 2008

First milestone and date by which it will be achieved: Approval by Corporate Strategy Board and Cabinet of the income targets for specific services to deliver in 2008/09 totalling £400,000 – July 2008

Second milestone and date by which it will be achieved: Establish monthly monitoring by the Efficiency and Improvement Board of delivery against the income target for 2008/09 – September 2008

Third milestone and date by which it will be achieved: Identify the income targets for specific services to deliver in 2009/10, 2010/11 and 2011/12 and ensure mechanisms are in place to monitor progress against them – October 2008

Enhancing debt management

Project sponsor: Myfanwy Barrett

Project managers: Jennifer Hydari and Greg Foley

Project objective: To establish robust sundry debtor processes that will facilitate the timely raising of invoices and maximise both the amount of debt the council collects and the efficiency with which it achieves this

Date by which the project will be concluded: December 2009

First milestone and date by which it will be achieved: Publish agreed schedule for the raising of invoices - May 2008

Second milestone and date by which it will be achieved: Distribute sundry debtors spreadsheet detailing debt position for 2007/2008 and 2008/2009 - May 2008

Third milestone and date by which it will be achieved: Commence distribution of a monthly sundry debtors report to Corporate Directors/Directors/Divisional Directors and other relevant officers - June 2008

Fourth milestone and date by which it will be achieved: Assess the benefits of integrating all of the council's income collection functions and take a decision accordingly – December 2009

Enhancing budget monitoring and management

Project sponsor: Myfanwy Barrett

Project manager: Jennifer Hydari

Project objective: To ensure there is regular and effective monitoring of spending against council budgets, based on reliable data, which enables the council to deliver its objectives within agreed spending limits

Date by which the project will be concluded: July 2008

First milestone and date by which it will be achieved: Develop an action plan responding to the findings of the financial effectiveness review carried out by PWC – July 2008

Increasing the Use of Resources score

Project sponsor: Myfanwy Barrett

Project manager: Jennifer Hydari, David Ward and Tom Whiting

Project objective: To achieve a Use of Resources score of 3 for the financial year 2007/08 and agree the council's ambitions under the new Use of Resources assessment arrangements from 2008/09

Date by which the project will be concluded: September 2008

First milestone and date by which it will be achieved: Effective closure of accounts and delivery of a balanced budget for 2007/08, enabling the council to fulfil its commitment of adding £1million to reserves – June 2008

Second milestone and date by which it will be achieved: Completion of the council's Use of Resources self assessment relating to the financial year 2007/08, along with undertaking urgent action to address any outstanding gaps that are identified through this process - June 2008

Third milestone and date by which it will be achieved: Gap analysis looking at the council's position against the proposed key lines of enquiry for the new Use of Resources assessment applicable from 2008/09 – June 2008

Fourth milestone and date by which it will be achieved: Agree the council's ambitions under the new Use of Resources assessment arrangements from 2008/09 and establish an action plan through which the ambitions will be achieved – September 2008

Ensuring Business Transformation Project efficiencies are being realised

Project sponsor: Myfanwy Barrett

Project manager: Jennifer Hydari

Project objective: To ensure the efficiencies identified through the council's Business Transformation Project are realised

Date by which the project will be concluded: March 2009

First milestone and date by which it will be achieved: Establish mechanisms that ensure all owners of future 'benefit cards' are clear about their responsibilities and implementation is monitored via the council's Benefits Board and Improvement Boards – July 2008

Second milestone and date by which it will be achieved: Establish a system for implementing new 'benefit cards' in the budget in a timely way – July 2008

Third milestone and date by which it will be achieved: For those projects where the 'benefit card' efficiencies have not yet been realised but the opportunity still exists and is appropriate, develop an action plan through which they can be successfully delivered – October 2008

Fourth milestone and date by which it will be achieved: Realise the agreed efficiencies for 2008/09 in directorates and corporately – March 2009

Developing an IT strategy and action plan

Project sponsor: Myfanwy Barrett

Project manager: Mahesh Patel

Project objective: Ensure the council establishes an IT strategy and action plan that map out how the current and future IT needs of the organisation will be met

Date by which the project will be concluded: October 2008

First milestone and date by which it will be achieved: Presentation to Corporate Strategy Board on the current status of IT provision and support in the organisation and the key challenges being faced – April 2008

Second milestone and date by which it will be achieved: Report to Corporate Strategy Board on the future of IT in the organisation outlining options and a clear recommendation on the way forward including indicative risks and costs – July 2008

Third milestone and date by which it will be achieved: Report to Cabinet on the future of IT in the organisation, with a decision on the way forward that will be underpinned by an IT strategy and action plan – September 2008

Fourth milestone and date by which it will be achieved: Commence implementation of the Cabinet decision and IT action plan – October 2008

Enhancing risk management

Project sponsor: Myfanwy Barrett

Project manager: David Ward

Project objective: To ensure the council is effective in identifying and mitigating risk

Date by which the project will be concluded: March 2010

First milestone and date by which it will be achieved: Continue to consider the council's risks through the Corporate Strategy Board and Improvement Boards on a regular basis – April 2008

Second milestone and date by which it will be achieved: Establish system whereby risks are reflected in all reports to Cabinet – May 2008

Third milestone and date by which it will be achieved: Determine whether all relevant partnerships the council is involved in have had the risks around them identified - March 2009

Fourth milestone and date by which it will be achieved: Ensure risk registers are developed for those partnerships where gaps are identified - December 2009

Fifth milestone and date by which it will be achieved: Ensure all services have systematically identified, and are mitigating, the risks that they face – March 2010

Enhancing disaster recovery and business continuity

Project sponsor: Myfanwy Barrett

Project manager: David Ward and Mahesh Patel

Project objective: To ensure the council has robust arrangements in place to enable it to operate as necessary in the event of a disaster impacting any of its functions

Date by which the project will be concluded: October 2008

First milestone and date by which it will be achieved: Identify and prioritise the disaster recovery and business continuity requirements of the organisation through a service area by service area needs analysis – July 2008

Second milestone and date by which it will be achieved: Report to Corporate Strategy Board on the prioritised disaster recovery and business continuity needs of the organisation – July 2008

Third milestone and date by which it will be achieved: Identify and corporately agree the most effective ways of fulfilling the priority disaster recovery and business continuity needs of the organisation – October 2008

Fourth milestone and date by which it will be achieved: Commence implementation of the most effective ways of fulfilling the priority disaster recovery and business continuity needs of the organisation – October 2008

Establishing a culture change programme

Project sponsor: Jon Turner

Project manager: Lesley Clarke

Project objective: To bring about a clear understanding of the culture the organisation is aspiring to and enabling it to become established

Date by which the project will be concluded: October 2008

First milestone and date by which it will be achieved: Define the existing values of the organisation and those it is aspiring to – July 2008

Second milestone and date by which it will be achieved: Establish a culture change 'route map' which outlines how to make the transition from existing values to those the council aspires to – July 2008

Third milestone and date by which it will be achieved: Establish a culture change programme for delivery by the organisation – September 2008

Fourth milestone and date by which it will be achieved: Commence implementation of the culture change programme – October 2008

Reducing sickness absence

Project sponsor: Jon Turner

Project manager: Lesley Clarke

Project objective: To reduce sickness absence across the council

Date by which the project will be concluded: July 2008

First milestone and date by which it will be achieved: Ensure the ERP system operates in a way that enables sickness absence to be accurately reported – April 2008

Second milestone and date by which it will be achieved: Establish arrangements for regular monitoring of sickness absence by Directorate Workforce Strategy Groups and Improvement Boards – May 2008

Third milestone and date by which it will be achieved: Rigorous application of established sickness absence processes by managers, with monitoring undertaken to determine levels of compliance – July 2008

Fourth milestone and date by which it will be achieved: Sickness absence reduction targets set for each directorate – July 2008

Reducing inappropriate use of temporary and agency staff

Project sponsor: Jon Turner

Project manager: Lesley Clarke

Project objective: To reduce the council's use of, and expenditure upon, temporary and agency staff where there are more effective alternatives

Date by which the project will be concluded: June 2010

First milestone and date by which it will be achieved: Establish a comprehensive picture of the use of temporary and agency staff across the organisation – October 2008

Second milestone and date by which it will be achieved: Establish regular monitoring by Directorate Workforce Strategy Groups of the use of temporary and agency staff and ensure the council is considering the development of cost effective alternatives wherever appropriate – December 2008

Third milestone and date by which it will be achieved: Establish new arrangements by which to procure temporary and agency staff – June 2009

Fourth milestone and date by which it will be achieved: Review the effectiveness of the new arrangements by which to procure temporary and agency staff – June 2010

Elected member development

Project sponsor: Jon Turner

Project manager: Ken Howgill

Project objective: To enable elected members to be as effective as possible in their roles

Date by which the project will be concluded: June 2009

First milestone and date by which it will be achieved: Launch elected member development programme, with regular evaluation and review incorporated – June 2008

Second milestone and date by which it will be achieved: Establish framework for the development of all elected members – December 2008

Third milestone and date by which it will be achieved: Secure elected member development charter accreditation – March 2009

Fourth milestone and date by which it will be achieved: Review leadership development activities to date for Cabinet and Corporate Strategy Board and develop and launch the next phase of the programme – June 2009

Management development

Project sponsor: Jon Turner

Project manager: Samantha Whittick

Project objective: To enable managers to be as effective as possible in fulfilling their roles and responsibilities

Date by which the project will be concluded: June 2009

First milestone and date by which it will be achieved: Conclude the pilot of the middle managers' development programme – September 2008

Second milestone and date by which it will be achieved: Commence roll out of the agreed middle managers' development programme, incorporating regular evaluation and review – October 2008

Third milestone and date by which it will be achieved: Commence roll out of the first line managers' development programme, incorporating regular evaluation and review – April 2009

Fourth milestone and date by which it will be achieved: Review leadership development activities to date for Cabinet and Corporate Strategy Board and develop and launch the next phase of the programme – June 2009

Workforce development

Project sponsor: Jon Turner

Project manager: Lesley Clarke

Project objective: To ensure the council has a workforce appropriate to its needs both now and in the future

Date by which the project will be concluded: December 2009

First milestone and date by which it will be achieved: Directorate Workforce Strategy Groups to conclude analysis of workforce profiles and identify key issues to be addressed - December 2008

Second milestone and date by which it will be achieved: Directorate Workforce Strategy Groups to conclude mapping of the council's skill shortages and identify key issues to be addressed - June 2009

Third milestone and date by which it will be achieved: Develop and commence implementation of action plans responding to the analysis of workforce profiles and skills shortages – July 2009

Fourth milestone and date by which it will be achieved: Launch a council-wide workforce development plan and career-planning programme - December 2009

Staff well-being and welfare

Project sponsor: Michael Lockwood

Project manager: Jon Turner

Project objective: To maximise the well-being and welfare of all council employees

Date by which the project will be concluded: March 2009

First milestone and date by which it will be achieved: Launch a revised range of staff benefits – June 2008

Second milestone and date by which it will be achieved: Develop and commence implementation of an action plan responding to the staff survey findings – September 2008

Third milestone and date by which it will be achieved: Develop and launch new staff well-being programme – September 2008

Fourth milestone and date by which it will be achieved: Launch flexible benefits package – March 2009

Managing people's performance

Project sponsor: Jon Turner

Project manager: Lesley Clarke

Project objective: To ensure council employees are performing at the level required of them and managers have the tools to support them to manage effectively

Date by which the project will be concluded: December 2009

First milestone and date by which it will be achieved: Agree a core competency framework for council staff – September 2008

Second milestone and date by which it will be achieved: Commence development of systems to link contribution and reward – October 2008

Third milestone and date by which it will be achieved: Launch 'fair treatment' suite for managers – December 2008

Fourth milestone and date by which it will be achieved: Conclude the pilot of the new IPAD framework - December 2008

Fifth milestone and date by which it will be achieved: Roll out the new IPAD framework, incorporating the newly agreed core competencies and organisational values – December 2008

Sixth milestone and date by which it will be achieved: Have all toolkits for managers in place – December 2009

Improving learning and development

Project sponsor: Jon Turner

Project manager: Ken Howgill

Project objective: To ensure the council maximises learning and development opportunities and the benefits gleaned from them

Date by which the project will be concluded: October 2009

First milestone and date by which it will be achieved: Commence the implementation of new evaluation systems for learning and development activity - October 2008

Second milestone and date by which it will be achieved: Conclude the review of council spend on learning and development activities – June 2009

Third milestone and date by which it will be achieved: Implement a new procurement framework for learning and development activity - June 2009

Fourth milestone and date by which it will be achieved: Establish a framework for the learning and development of all council staff – October 2009

Maximising the positive impact of communications

Project sponsor: Tom Whiting

Project manager: Andrew Hadfield

Project objective: To ensure the council maximises the positive impact its communications activity has on the council's reputation, customer satisfaction and staff morale

Date by which the project will be concluded: March 2009

First milestone and date by which it will be achieved: Discussion at Corporate Strategy Board regarding the council's approach to the Local Government Association's 'Reputation' campaign – July 2008

Second milestone and date by which it will be achieved: Commence a programme of activities by elected members and senior officers to promote, on regional and national platforms, areas in which Harrow Council excels – September 2008

Third milestone and date by which it will be achieved: Conclude delivery of the outputs detailed in the 2008 communications plan entitled 'Building Reputation' (such as 'Harrow People', communications campaigns and levels of media coverage) – March 2009

Fourth milestone and date by which it will be achieved: Monitor the impact of the outputs contained in the communications plan, ensure the council's media protocol is observed and provide elected members and managers with such support as is necessary to enable them to deal effectively with the media – April 2008 to March 2009

Improving Access to Services

Project sponsor: Michael Lockwood

Project manager: Carol Cutler

Project objective: To drive improvements in customer services across the council

Date by which the project will be concluded: April 2009

First milestone and date by which it will be achieved: Report to Corporate Strategy Board outlining the scale and nature of complaints received by the council through the website and Access Harrow and decide whether to replicate such reporting in subsequent months – June 2008

Second milestone and date by which it will be achieved: Commence regular 'mystery shopping' activity across services to assess compliance with customer care standards and ensure monitoring of customer care information through the Improvement Boards and Overview and Scrutiny – July 2008 *

Third milestone and date by which it will be achieved: Commission an IT-based system for the processing and analysis of complaints – July 2008**

Fourth milestone and date by which it will be achieved: Establish a set of customer care standards applicable when contacting the council (e-mailing, writing to or visiting), including an outline of the quality of care that people can expect to receive – September 2008

Fifth milestone and date by which it will be achieved: Produce a comprehensive plan for improving access to services across the council in response to the Access to Services inspection - September 2008

Sixth milestone and date by which it will be achieved: Complete the implementation of the means by which the council will ensure customer complaints are dealt with effectively, information relating to them can be made available corporately and they are used to drive service improvement – December 2008

Seventh milestone and date by which it will be achieved: Identify the level of 'avoidable contact' customers have to engage in before their issue is resolved, report this information to government as part of the national indicator set and ensure it is being used to drive improvement in service design and delivery – April 2009

* Requires funding

** Dependent on a decision by Corporate Strategy Board around the setting up of a corporate complaints function

Improving services through better understanding of local need

Project sponsor: Tom Whiting

Project manager: Mike Howes

Project objective: To ensure the council has a sound understanding of the needs of local people and service delivery develops in line with it

Date by which the project will be concluded: On-going

First milestone and date by which it will be achieved: Community consultation strategy agreed – July 2008

Second milestone and date by which it will be achieved: Corporate mechanisms established to enable community consultation and engagement to be co-ordinated across the council – September 2008

Third milestone and date by which it will be achieved: Programme of Equality Impact Assessments established, systematically covering all services in the period up to March 2011 – September 2008

Supporting performance improvement

Project sponsor: Tom Whiting

Project manager: Andrea Durn

Project objective: Ensure the most effective mechanisms are in place to support improvement in performance across the council

Date by which the project will be concluded: March 2009

First milestone and date by which it will be achieved: Review and refine the integrated performance and financial management and business planning framework including Improvement Boards, challenge panels, CSB performance mornings, setting up performance clinics and updating guidance and toolkits - August 2008

Second milestone and date by which it will be achieved: Ensure the implementation of the Data Quality policy, strategy and action plan and support the external audit of the data quality management arrangements - September 2008

Third milestone and date by which it will be achieved: Develop the performance module with Capita and provide underlying support for the managers' development programme - October 2008 (plus continue providing performance training as per existing learning and development activity until the programme is established)

Fourth milestone and date by which it will be achieved: Support the Value for Money framework by working with IPF and supporting the external audit and ensure the framework is delivered by implementing the action plan - October 2008

Fifth milestone and date by which it will be achieved: Support the Efficiency Reviews through the provision of performance information, quality checking, benchmarking and management advisory support - March 2009

Sixth milestone and date by which it will be achieved: Co-ordinate the transition to Comprehensive Area Assessment (CAA), including the development of new scorecards and inclusion of data relating to the national indicator set and the development of local indicators in Improvement Boards for 2008/09 - March 2009

Seventh milestone and date by which it will be achieved: Lead and support council delivery of the agreed audits and inspections by both internal audit and the Audit Commission. Ensure gap analyses are carried out, self-assessments with evidence are correctly provided, all deadlines and requirements are met and inspectors and auditors are adequately supported – on-going

Ensuring ERP, Management Information (MI) and related interfaces, are operating to maximum effect

Project sponsor: Myfanwy Barrett

Project manager: Tom Whiting, Jennifer Hydari and Greg Foley

Project objective: To ensure ERP, Management Information (MI) and related interfaces are set up and being utilised to manage the business in the most effective and efficient way

Date by which the project will be concluded:

First milestone and date by which it will be achieved: Continue to deliver a programme of ERP 'health checks' for managers – April 2008

Second milestone and date by which it will be achieved: Draw on the Capita, PWC and internal audit reviews and learning from the 'health checks' for managers to establish a comprehensive picture of the challenges the council is experiencing with ERP and agree a programme of activity to address them – July 2008

Third milestone and date by which it will be achieved: Assess the benefits of establishing a single programme of activity and set of governance arrangements to address the challenges the council faces around ERP, MI and related interfaces – July 2008

Fourth milestone and date by which it will be achieved: Commission such work as is necessary to resolve any gaps that may exist in the organisation's understanding and ability to deal with challenges it faces around ERP, MI and related interfaces – October 2008