

Meeting:	Best Value Advisory Panel
Date:	22 March 2005
Subject:	First Contact - Progress Report
Responsible Officer:	Executive Director (Organisational Development)
Contact Officer:	Executive Director (Organisational Development)
Portfolio Holder:	Finance, Performance & IT
Key Decision:	No
Status:	Part I

Section 1: Summary

Decision Required

This report outlines the progress made with regard to the Best Value First Contact report.

The Panel is requested to note the progress made.

Reason for report

This report follows on from a progress report to the Panel on 28th April 2004 and outlines the proposed action to ensure implementation of the original Best Value Review.

Benefits

The Council is seeking to develop a One-Stop Shop and multi-channel contact centre to fundamentally improve the service provided to its customers.

The development of this approach should ensure clearly perceptible improvements in service standards e.g. calls being answered within a defined period, customers having one point of contact for multiple enquiries with the resultant increase in customer satisfaction.

Cost of Proposals

The Council is currently seeking a Business Transformation Partner to develop and implement these proposals.

Any costs will be contained within the Business Cases produced as a requirement of this partnership.

Risks

By not seeking a strategic partner the Council risks not being able to cost effectively introduce the recommendations of the Best Value Review.

Implications if recommendations rejected

Members are not advised of progress towards a key corporate objective.

Section 2: Report

Business Transformation Partnership

As part of the process of delivering “New Harrow”, the Council is undertaking a radical and comprehensive programme of organisational change. This change is dependent on delivering major business transformation projects. The Council has recognised that it cannot deliver the business transformation necessary without external assistance. To that end, the Council is seeking a potential partner to deliver both the ICT elements and the business process re-engineering and change management services associated with the business transformation.

The three major areas that the Council has identified that it wishes to pursue initially are:

- Customer Contact and Service Delivery Strategy (First Contact);
- Improved Operational Systems and Processes; and
- Management Information

Therefore the First Contact initiative will be taken forward through this Business Transformation Partnership.

Timescales

The Council has now issued the final “Invitation to Negotiate” (ITN) and there are two bidders – Capita and Fujitsu – who have to submit their proposals to the Council by 1st April 2005. (A third potential bidder, Unisys, withdrew in January 2005.) The potential contractor will be selected by 30th April 2005 with the contract awarded in June 2005.

The ITN requires that the successful bidder provides a one-stop shop facility and material and visible improvements to the services to the public within 6 months of the contract award i.e. by December 2005; a similar provision applies to the Contract Centre.

ITN

The requirements for First Contact as set out in the ITN are set out in Appendix 1.

These are summarised below and will be discussed furthering the presentation to be given to Members at the Panel’s meeting:

- Multi-channel contact centre to provide integrated seamless service
- One or more one-stop shops for a ‘drop-in’ service from the Council and strategic partners
- Application of CRM technology to achieve appropriate integration of transactions
- Change management and business process re-engineering of ‘back office’ processes
- One-stop shop in town centre or other appropriate location
- Phased introduction of services
- Multi-channel contact centre, with, again, a phased introduction of services to ensure resources not overstretched and minimise risk
- Development of locally based service access points
- Development of Kiosks

Outcomes from First Contact

The outcomes required by the Council are set out in pages 124-125 of the ITN. They stress that the objective is to fundamentally improve customer service and achieve 80% fulfilment at the first point of contact and substantially improve the general efficiency of the Council’s operations.

Consultation

As part of the First Contact Review, extensive consultation was carried out with service users, staff, trade unions and community organisations.

There has been extensive consultation with staff, trade unions and elected Members on the development of the Business Transformation Partnership. There

will be further consultation with service users once the Partner has been appointed and the proposals for First Contact are further developed.

Financial Implications

Any costs associated with this proposal will be contained within the appropriate budget for the Business Transformation Project.

Legal Implications

Continued consultation with staff and trade unions is desirable in order to demonstrate that the Council has informed and consulted with staff in the event of any organisational change and therefore complies with relevant employment law. Detailed legal advice on property, planning, employment and contractual issues (amongst others) will be provided when details of the potential contractors' proposals are provided.

Equalities Impact

The ITN for First Contact requires partners to demonstrate how their proposals will meet the needs of Harrow's diverse communities. The development of First contact will enable hard to reach groups and other disadvantaged groups within the community to access the Council's services more easily.

Section 3: Supporting Information/Background Documents

Background Documents:

First Contact Best Value Review
Report to BVAP 28.4.04

New Harrow Business Transformation Partnership
Invitation to negotiate for Business Transformation Partner.