

FUTURE COUNCIL

Future Council: Roadmap Bulletin 2

This bulletin will cover a number of issues relating to our Future Council programme including:

- Management arrangements from April 2012
- An update on the future delivery of our IT service

Management arrangements from April 2012

As you are aware, one of the proposals agreed as part of service prioritisation was the deletion of our two Executive Director posts. In order to allow the organisation time to plan for what will be a fundamental change at Leadership Team level, the deletion is being phased over a two-year period. This means the Executive Director – Resources post will be deleted in April 2012 with the Executive Director – Services post following a year later in April 2013.

Both Directors, Tricia Taylor as Executive Director – Resources and Cate Hall as Executive Director – Services, contribute an enormous amount to the organisation across a wide range of responsibilities, including the line management of a number of staff.

In order to prepare for April 2012, Leadership Team has agreed to a project, led by Tricia Taylor, to look at the corporate roles and responsibilities undertaken by Executive Directors as it would be unrealistic for Cate Hall to absorb all of these following Tricia's departure. This work ranges from their involvement in our Human Resources and complaints processes to the Directors' role as CMB members.

In addition, Leadership Team has considered revised management arrangements from April 2012.

There are three underlying principles influencing the changes:

- wherever practicable, to avoid adding Heads/Section Heads to Cate Hall's portfolio (given existing workloads)
- to place Heads/Section Heads, as far as is practicable at this stage, in a destination point that **could** continue longer term, avoiding reporting lines being changed repeatedly.
- Heads of Service have to perform a corporate role – the requirement of working as one organisation, championing the council's interests above Service interests and being willing to

undertake thematic or cross-cutting functions is a fundamental requirement for Leadership Team.

Outlined below are the current posts that the Executive Director – Resources manages and the reporting lines from next April. You will notice that the job title of the Head of Strategic Finance (Bernard Clarke) will be amended to reflect the post's proposed new responsibilities in relation to Shared Services.

	Management arrangements from April 2012
Head of Strategic Finance and Shared Services	Reporting to Managing Director
Head of Legal and Property	Reporting to Managing Director
Head of Human Resources	Reporting to Head of Strategic Finance and Shared Services
Head of ICT	Reporting to Head of Strategic Finance and Shared Services
Partnerships and Performance Section Head	Reporting to Head of Legal and Property
Customer Services Section Head	Reporting to Head of Environmental Services

This is some of the thinking that helped inform Leadership Team's decisions:

Shared Services

The Executive Director – Resources has played a crucial role in championing shared services, providing momentum and leadership. Whilst it is not possible to replace the knowledge fully, I do think it is important that we have a new lead to:

- Co-ordinate our input into the relationship with Three Rivers District Council (TRDC);
- Take forward new dialogue with other authorities on further shared services;
- Represent Watford's interests at Joint Committee;
- Jointly manage the Shared Services Leadership Team with David Gardner from TRDC;
- Line manage the Head of HR and ICT.

The current Head of Strategic Finance will take on this role. We know that the Shared Services function over the next two years will evolve as new legislation (e.g. for Revenues and Benefits), new service delivery arrangements (e.g. for ICT), and a possible conversion to a lead authority model (e.g. Finance and HR) emerge. In addition, increasingly the joint senior management meeting between Three Rivers DC and Watford BC will take on more of the strategic and development role for Shared Services. In anticipation of this, to reduce the level of demands and also as Shared Services delivery becomes more embedded; we are proposing that the Shared Services Management Team meets monthly rather than fortnightly as at present.

I appreciate the vital role Human Resources will play in supporting the council as it delivers the Future Council programme over the next couple of years and so Terry Baldwin (Head of Human Resources) will report to me directly on matters that affect Human Resources policy development and organisational development.

Customer Services Section Head

In light of the principles underpinning Leadership Team's decisions, the Customer Services Section Head will report to the Head of Environmental Services (Alan Gough). Environmental Services is the majority "stakeholder" in terms of the volume of front line service activity and in relation to where the greatest opportunity for further integration exists. The Head of Service has been tasked to ensure that the Customer Service Centre continues to deliver a high quality, innovative service that is focused on corporate delivery.

The functions transferring to Environmental Services will include the Information Unit (GIS and LLPG officers) and the Print and Post team as they currently report to the Customer Services Section Head.

You can view the new [service structure](#) here.

We will have to re-visit the structure next year in light of Cate's departure in 2013 but I hope that by making some of the key decisions now, we can minimise any future changes.

The future delivery of the IT service

We have now appointed Actica Consulting to support us in conducting the options appraisal*, a business case* for the preferred option and a requirements specification. Actica have been gathering information relating to the service and associated budgets as well as testing the market for interest in delivering this type of service for both councils.

We are expecting to have a report on the options appraisal and the business case by the end of October 2011. This will be shared with ICT staff, management teams at both councils as well as the Joint Shared Services Committee in November 2011, where a decision regarding the option to be pursued will be made.

Getting involved – your questions answered

I am pleased to report that the '[ask a question](#)' facility that we created on the Intranet is working well and that we have had a number of questions already. Keep them coming.

These questions are really important. Not only are they an opportunity for individuals to raise issues but they also provide a good picture of areas that seem to be of more general concern.

Although each question has had an individual response (so far within our two working day commitment), I thought it would be helpful to address the use of consultants, which has already been raised in a couple of questions.

There seems to be some misconceptions about why we are using consultants and the role they are

playing in helping us with service redesign.

There is a significant amount of work that needs to be done in a short period of time in order to achieve our Future Council plans for IT services and for waste and recycling, street cleansing and ground maintenance services.

Staff within these service areas already have a full workload ensuring that their service continues to be delivered to a standard customers (internally as well as externally) expect and this must remain their priority. Given this, we have to recognise that there is not the capacity available in-house to take on what are additional, and highly complex, major pieces of work. We also have to acknowledge that there are external suppliers that have had a great deal of experience in these areas of work, which they have built up over a number of years, and we do not have the time in all cases, to go through the steep learning curve that would be needed to get to their level of specialist knowledge and expertise.

However, it is important to remember that the projects are being led, and managed, by the council (not the consultants) and that it will be the council that makes the decisions on the delivery of its services in future.

Manny Lewis
Managing Director

Jargon Buster

The Future Council: Roadmap Bulletin will sometimes uses words and phrases that are familiar to some of us but might be new or less clear to others. Where we think this might be the case, we thought it would be helpful to provide a short explanation. Here are two that are used in this bulletin:

* **Options appraisal** – this is a phrase that is used a lot during service redesign programmes. Option appraisal is the stage when you set objectives, create and review options and analyse their relative costs and benefits. Option appraisal should help develop a value for money solution that meets the objectives of the project. An effective option appraisal should help answer the following questions:

- have you taken into account all relevant factors in deciding what the project should be?
- should you go ahead with the project?
- which is the best way to carry out the project?

* **Business case** – this is a key document in a major project. It clearly sets out the justification for a project which normally contains information about why the project is required, the benefits it will deliver, how much it will cost and any risks to implementation. The business case is used to assess the ongoing viability of the project i.e. should we continue with it and it also makes sure we can tell if we have achieved what we set out to do.

