

## THREE RIVERS & WATFORD SHARED SERVICES JOINT COMMITTEE

Date of meeting: 28 May 2012

PART A	AGENDA ITEM
	<b>8</b>

**Title:** NEW STAFF APPRAISAL PROCESS

**Report of:** Terry Baldwin – Head of Human Resources

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1. **SUMMARY**

1.1 This report provides an update on the move to a new staff appraisal process.

2. **RECOMMENDATIONS**

2.1 That the Committee reviews, make such amendments as it thinks fit and approves the plan

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**Report approved by:**

Bernard Clarke, Head of Strategic Finance – Watford Borough Council

### 3. DETAILED PROPOSAL

#### 3.1 Introduction

This paper updates the reports made to Shared Service Joint Committee in February 2012. Agreement was reached on the following:

1. That the list of essential and desirable characteristics for the appraisal reflect the councils' needs (Appendix 1)
2. That the new process should be launched from Q4 2012-2013
3. That the process should continue to roll out from Q4 annually to maintain the link between objective setting and business planning.
4. That a new competency framework should be developed to support the appraisal
5. That, with the support of ICT, a specification should be created and an options appraisal drawn up to establish what level of process automation could be achieved within the available budget

#### 3.2 Update

Items 1 to 4 are still integral to the project. However Item 5 has been abandoned on the following basis:

- Recognition that our budget of £6k is unlikely to secure significant automation – entry level to a good package incurs a minimum cost of £15K
- Appraisal is not listed as a project for ICT, leading to doubts about their capacity to support it. Bearing in mind the limited automation we can afford, creating an ICT spec would not in any case be a good use of their resources

The revised plan is therefore to develop a high quality manual process which delivers all the essentials from the original report. From piloting the process in 2013 we can then assess the benefits of adopting some automation (in the form of editable PDFs or E forms, for example) for future years.

The downside of this approach is it does not reduce administration in managing the appraisal cascade or in training planning, and the manual workload we had hoped to reduce will remain. However, it reflects a realistic assessment of current resources and the primary drive of this project has always been to improve the quality and value of the appraisal discussion.

To broaden the basis of feedback, a staff survey was launched in April 2012. This has attracted an encouraging level of response – negating any perception that people are apathetic about appraisal as a process. This feedback will influence the final format/content of the appraisal documents and the training and briefing to support it.

#### 3.3 Plan – Next steps

- Work on format design will resume once the survey feedback is analysed
- Work on a new competency framework will begin shortly; the intention is for this project to be supported by a HR Business Partner. Because the competency framework will have functionality outside appraisal (it has the potential to support succession planning, skills auditing and salary planning, for example.) this will be treated as a separate but closely linked project.

The table below sets out a timeline for the development of appraisal and the competency framework. A further report will be presented in July which will include a proposal for format and content.

## 3.4

**Time Line: Development of Appraisal and Competency Framework**

<b>Appraisal</b>		<b>Competency framework</b>	
<b>May</b>	Report to SSMT Staff Survey	<b>May/ June</b>	Research and consult Focus Groups?
<b>June</b>	Survey feedback available Feedback to staff from Survey Article in All Aboard/ Wats up?	<b>June</b>	Article in All Aboard/ Wats up?
<b>July</b>	Draft format and process (excluding competency section) Comms support to develop format	<b>July</b>	Draft 1 to Leadership Team/ Management Board/ SSMT
<b>End of July</b>	Report/ proposal to Leadership Team/ Management Board/ SSMT		
<b>August</b>	Redesign/ Finalise Article in All Aboard/ Wats up?	<b>August/ Sept</b>	Redraft/ Finalise
<b>Oct</b>	Incorporate Competency framework Final appraisal document ready	<b>Oct</b>	Article in All Aboard/ Wats up?
<b>Oct- Nov</b>	User guides Design briefing and training Article in All Aboard/ Wats up?		
<b>Dec / January</b>	Training Sessions		
<b>Feb</b>	Launch in both councils		

**4. IMPLICATIONS****4.1 Policy**

4.1.1 The recommendations in this report are within the policies of the Joint Committee, Three Rivers District Council and Watford Borough Council.

**4.2 Financial**

4.2.1 There are no changes to the budget or the efficiency gains already agreed by the Joint Committee, Three Rivers District Council or Watford Borough Council as a result of this report.

**4.3 Legal Issues (Monitoring Officer)**

4.3.1 None specific to this report.

**4.4 Risk Management and Health & Safety**

4.4.1 There are no risks associated with the decision members are being asked to take.

**4.5 Equalities, Staffing, Accommodation, Community Safety, Sustainability & Environment, Communications & Website and Customer Services**

4.5.1 None specific.

**Appendices**

1. The Appraisal Process – Essential and Desirable.

**Background Papers**

No background papers were used in the preparation of this report.