#### PRIVATE AND CONFIDENTIAL

## **London Borough of Barnet**

## Minutes of the Council Directors Group 21 August 2012

#### Present:

Nick Walkley

Chief Executive

Maryellen Salter

For Deputy Chief Executive

Lesley Meeks

For Director for Commercial Services

Dawn Wakeling

For Director of Adult Social Care and Health

Jeff Lustig Julie Taylor Director of Corporate Governance Assistant Chief Executive

Ann Graham Pam Wharfe For Interim Director of Children's Services

Interim Director for Environment, Planning &

Regeneration

Also attending:

Chris Palmer

Assistant Director, Communications (for item 3)

**Action By** 

## 1. MINUTES AND MATTERS ARISING

The Group noted that the minutes of the 7 August 2012 meeting (One Barnet Programme Board) would be circulated with the agenda for the next Board meeting (18 September 2012).

### 2. CORPORATE FORWARD PLAN

The Group noted the Corporate Forward Plan and the following changes:

Julie Taylor

Parking Review – remove from Cabinet Briefing agenda (3 September 2012) and Cabinet agenda (27 September 2012).

West Hendon Regeneration Scheme – remove from Cabinet agenda Briefing (3 September 2012) and Cabinet agenda (27 September 2012).

Adult Social Care White Paper – remove from Cabinet agenda (27 September 2012) and present to Safeguarding OSC (10 September 2012) as a pre-decision scrutiny item.

Kate Kennally / Dawn Wakeling

Directors were requested to give consideration to decisions required to be taken in the period November 2012 to February 2013 for inclusion in the Corporate Forward Plan.

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## 3. LEGAL SERVICES SHARED SERVICE UPDATE

Jeff Lustig provided an update on the LB Barnet and LB Harrow shared legal service.

Directors Group were informed that the inter authority agreement with LB Harrow had now been signed and the shared service would be operational from 3 September 2012. Existing managers / teams would remain in place for three to four months, and during this time managers and clients would develop Service Level Agreements (SLAs). Existing legal support arrangements would remain the same until SLAs had been agreed.

Nick Walkley welcomed the finalisation of the inter-authority agreement and the move to a shared service. He emphasised the importance of ongoing communication with transferred staff to ensure that they were aware of developments and key issues at Barnet.

## 4. QUARTER 1 2012/13 PERFORMANCE REPORT

Directors Group considered the Quarter 1 2012/13 Performance Report.

Recent performance improvements in the following areas were noted: Adult Social Care and Health (rehabilitation services and personal budgets); council tax collection rates; reduction in the number of NEETs; and response times to FOI requests. Current performance issues were identified as: budget variances; children in care who were placed for adoption; deterioration in planning performance; recycling performance; and time spent in emergency accommodation.

Directors noted that London Council's benchmarking was indicating the Council were underperforming against our comparators in areas relating to supporting venerable groups.

In relation to customer services, performance in relation to answering calls within 20 seconds required improvement, particularly within back office services. Directors noted the requirement for additional spending against the 2e2 contract to enable call handling to be monitored. It was noted that there needed to be greater emphasis on resolving customer enquiries at the first point of contact.

The Group welcomed the work of the AD FOI Working Group which had assisted in driving up performance towards the 90% target. Chris Palmer advised the Group that published FOI

requests would soon be more prominently available on the website alongside relevant previous decisions.

Directors Group discussed the issue of redacted contracts which had been released under the FOI and whether as an authority we should move to publishing these by default.

### AGREED that:-

- 1. reports on: a) the reduction in the number of children in care Julie Taylor who are placed for adoption; and b) the planning service be presented to the next quarterly performance meeting.
- 2. that the FOI Team meet with directors within two weeks to identify outstanding long-term cases, with these cases being resolved within six weeks.
- 3. Jeff Lustig, Pam Wharfe and Lesley Meeks to meet and agree an outline procedure for publishing redacted Pam Wharfe / contracts for discussion with the external auditor.

  Jeff Lustig / Pam Wharfe / Lesley Meeks
- 4. Jeff Lustig to commence a review of the Council's Jeff Lustig Publication.

# 5. COMPLAINTS PERFORMANCE REPORT FOR CORPORATE COMPLAINTS AND CHILDREN'S AND ADULTS' STATUTORY COMPLAINTS

The Group noted that whilst there had been an overall improvement in complaints handling, the speed of resolving complaints remained an issue.

AGREED that complaints performance should be discussed at the — Julie Taylor next AD Performance Group meeting to raise the profile of this issue.

#### 6. INFORMATION GOVERNANCE

The Group considered the Quarter 1 Information Governance report which detailed the number of FOI requests received by the Council.

Nick Walkley expressed concern at the risk that the Council may Jeff Lustig / All receive formal notification from the ICO due to: delays in responding to FOI requests; FOI complaints; and performing below 85% for responding to FOI requests.

## 7. CORPORATE RISK REGISTER

The Group considered the Corporate Risk Register which had been updated following a Director workshop on 24 July 2012. It was noted that some of the new risks (such as Financial Resilience and Treasury) could not be directly influenced by the council.

## AGREED that:

 the Corporate Risk Register be included reported to the next One Barnet Programme Board meeting on 18 September 2012.

**Andrew Travers** 

2. the Corporate Risk Register be appended to the Quarter 1 Performance Report for reporting to CRC on 27 September 2012.

Andrew Travers
/ Julie Taylor

3. the risk relating to citizen participation to be revised to better reflect the strategic objective contained in the Corporate Plan.

Julie Taylor

4. the Corporate Risk Register to be reported quarterly with Performance Report

Andrew Travers
/ Julie Taylor