

EqIA of 2011/12 Council budget

1. Departmental information and audit trail

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Consultation with other officers / departments	

2. Vision / aims and objectives

Departmental vision statement	<p><u>Vision for services over next three years</u></p> <p>As the DCE department has four lead Members, the vision for the service has been drawn from the Cabinet's budget principles.</p> <p>The cabinet have set out their vision to create a fairer future for all. The vision sets out the importance of managing every penny carefully, being a compassionate council and fostering a culture of innovation through partnership. Deputy Chief Executive's (DCE) department will deliver on that vision. In particular we will have a relentless focus on rationalising our support services so more money is protected at the frontline and working alongside others to provide the organisation with the tools to innovate and transform service delivery.</p> <p>There are three broad elements to achieving the vision:</p> <p><i>Rationalisation – reducing costs</i></p> <p>The ability to rationalise structures, reducing costs and improving efficiency, has been widely demonstrated within the DCE department over the last three years, as outlined in the context below. The merging of DCE and R&N continues that approach and additional savings beyond the 25% proposed for each of the two departments will be put forward in the next round of budget challenge.</p> <p>Within the services that made up DCE prior to the merger, cost savings will be achieved in line with the 25% target set out by the Cabinet. Where possible, these savings are in the process of being implemented now in order to deliver full year savings in 2010/2011. It is important we look across the organisation for further opportunities, for example to stop unnecessary monitoring and instead focus resources on effective and better audit and performance reporting.</p> <p><i>Innovation and redesign – getting more for our money</i></p>
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	<p>DCE will provide leadership and secure opportunities for innovation and service redesign. As examples; options are currently being explored for sharing communications services with other boroughs, the contract with Vangent is being renegotiated, HR processes are being streamlined and the department is a major contributor to the Right First Time approach.</p> <p><i>Transformation – doing things differently</i></p> <p>We want to transform how we do business and who we do business with – this is about creating a new journey of interaction with our residents, customers and stakeholders. It is about working in partnership to secure the outcomes of a fairer future.</p> <p>We have already transformed how we do business with senior partners in the local strategic partnership. We need to look at across all our partnerships and do things in ways that add the most value. We are looking at the ‘customer experience’; this needs a programme of work to reshape the experience of our everyday services.</p> <p>Most importantly, we need to transform as one council working together and understanding the inter-dependencies that exist across the whole of council services. The new DCE department will be a champion for ‘whole council’ working so that taxpayers ultimately get better value for their money.</p>
<h3>3. 2011/12 budget proposals</h3>	
<p>Budget “headlines”</p>	<p>The services within DCE are predominately back office. Savings are proposed to be realised through service reconfiguration and reducing support costs. Therefore any impacts would fall on staff. As specific proposals are/were put forward, and at each stage of implementation thereafter, the different impacts on different categories of staff will or have been assessed</p> <p>However, there are also some services which are outward facing where impacts could <u>potentially</u> fall on service users, these include those within client services and the external facing communications work. However, impacts are assessed as lower risk with appropriate mitigation identified.</p>
<h3>4. Service users</h3>	
<p>Service users</p>	<p>See above paragraph on outwards facing services</p>

5. Equality issues identified through departmental EqIA processes

Budget proposal	Type of saving	Equality impacts / disproportionate impact or discrimination identified ¹	Evidence gathered	Mitigation / further action
Human Resources				
Reduction in transactional staff through extension of self-service/efficient process. Reduction in direct staffing support. These reductions exemplify the second and third stages of the HR shared services review which was first implemented in April 2009	Back office and support	These savings arise from a review already carried out, which assessed equality impacts.	See review	See review
Reduction in occupational health contract and further reduction of development budgets.	Smarter procurement	Not fully assessed, will be completed as specific proposals are put forward (see mitigation/further action)	As specific proposals are put forward, and at each stage of implementation thereafter, the different impacts on different categories of staff will be assessed.	As specific proposals are put forward, and at each stage of implementation thereafter, the different impacts on different categories of staff will be assessed.
Corporate Strategy				
Cease Place Survey	Back office and support	The ceasing of this survey will not impact either internally or on the community.	n/a	There are other appropriate mechanisms in place to gain the views of residents to inform decision making

¹ Against equality strands in Council's E&HR scheme and "protected characteristics" in Equality Act 2010. in respect of race, gender, disability, religion/belief, sexual orientation, age, human rights, gender re-assignment, and pregnancy and maternity.

Budget proposal	Type of saving	Equality impacts / disproportionate impact or discrimination identified ¹	Evidence gathered	Mitigation / further action
Review of structure, staffing levels and support costs across the division. This would include significantly reducing the training budget, ceasing subscriptions to external policy services (such as LGiU which costs £20,000 per annum) and minimising all spend	Management structure/service reconfiguration	These savings arise in part from a review which has already been undertaken. As specific proposals were put forward, and at each stage of implementation thereafter, the different impacts on different categories of staff were assessed. There were no differential impacts. There is no risk of differential impact arising the ceasing of subscriptions	The impacts on different categories of staff as the training budget is reduced will be monitored.	The impacts on different categories of staff as the training budget is reduced will be monitored.
Review of Support to Leader and Opposition	Management structure/service reconfiguration	These savings arise from a review which has already been undertaken. As specific proposals were put forward, and at each stage of implementation thereafter, the different impacts on different categories of staff were assessed. There were no differential impacts	Assessment of impacts across staff within the review	These savings arise from a review which has already been undertaken. As specific proposals were put forward, and at each stage of implementation thereafter, the different impacts on different categories of staff were assessed. There were no differential impacts
Communications				
Reduce frequency of Southwark Life to four per year	Back office and support	No differential impact as it goes to every household.	Distribution and readership is routinely monitored.	Distribution and readership is routinely monitored.
Cancel Newsflash press office support software	Back office and support	No impact on staff or externally	Assessment of impact on staff	No impact on staff or externally
Cease publication of Together staff magazine in current paper format	Back office and support	Some impact on staff with limited/no access to computer to be assessed in the ongoing evaluation of all communications activities.	Some impact on staff with limited/no access to computer to be assessed in the ongoing evaluation of all communications activities.	Internal communications will focus upon supporting managers' briefings and will seek to expand the reach of the Source and Source in brief to keep all staff informed.
Reduce staff training budget	Back office and support	Will be assessed as specific proposals are put forward (see mitigation/further action)	Through implementation the different impacts on different categories of staff will be assessed.	Through implementation the different impacts on different categories of staff will be assessed.

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Centralise and reduce corporate campaigns activity and cease publication of Housing News in current paper format.	Back office and support	Some impact on tenants especially those without access to computers/internet Currently available on request in other formats e.g. Braille, other languages, but this has not been taken up	Assessment of current campaigns and readership, and requests for other formats	The campaigns should focus upon the priorities identified in the budget setting process, following extensive public consultation and the emerging corporate plan. This includes using the council magazine Southwark Life
Reorganisation of the communications team	Management structure/service reconfiguration	As specific proposals are put forward, and at each stage of implementation thereafter, the different impacts on different categories of staff will be assessed.	As specific proposals are put forward, and at each stage of implementation thereafter, the different impacts on different categories of staff will be assessed.	As specific proposals are put forward, and at each stage of implementation thereafter, the different impacts on different categories of staff will be assessed.
Shared service with Westminster	Management structure/service reconfiguration	As specific proposals are put forward, and at each stage of implementation thereafter, the different impacts on different categories of staff will be assessed.	As specific proposals are put forward, and at each stage of implementation thereafter, the different impacts on different categories of staff will be assessed.	A shared service will develop a robust communications plan to ensure that both authorities are able to effectively inform their diverse audiences of the wide range of services and benefits that both councils provide, whilst also encouraging active participation in borough life by local citizens. All communications will be evidence based and fully evaluated to ensure that all audiences feel that they are informed.
Recharge of copyright licensing agency (CLA) costs to all depts	Other	No impact on staff or externally	Assessment of impact on staff	No impact on staff or externally
Client Services				
Savings already built into Vangent Contract and the renegotiation of the contract to include more services without additional cost.	Smarter procurement	All groups use the Customer contact centre and one stop shops and therefore it is not anticipated that any particular group(s) will be disproportionately affected. It is assumed, based on recent analysis completed, that there are sufficient opportunities within the existing contract	Contract monitoring and monitoring of the customer contact centre and one stop shops	EqIA's will be completed if any services are withdrawn or reduced as part of the realignment of the contract

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		for efficiency to be realised without cutting the current provision of service.		
Further Vangent contract savings realised through transformation	Smarter procurement	All groups use the Customer contact centre and one stop shops and therefore it is not anticipated that any particular group(s) will be disproportionately affected. It is assumed, based on recent analysis completed, that there are sufficient opportunities within the existing contract for efficiency to be realised without cutting the current provision of service.	Analysis of a number of services indicates that a significant proportion of all current customer demand is avoidable and adds no value to the customer or to the services delivered by the council. In order to realise cost savings over the next 3 years the council will focus on providing services 'Right First Time'; thus forcing out the waste and duplication.	EqIA's will be completed if any services are withdrawn or reduced as part of the realignment of the contract
Increase Council Tax court costs for summonses and liability orders against non-payers to highest in London	Other	<p>All groups within the community may be subject to action to recover unpaid Council Tax where individuals fail to make payment of the Council Tax due.</p> <p>The increase in court costs will disadvantage only those customers who seek to avoid paying Council Tax, but safeguards will exist to protect the most vulnerable groups of the community. Therefore it is not anticipated that any particular groups will be disproportionately affected by the increase in court cost.</p>	<p>A survey of London Boroughs carried out in 2009 and 2010 confirms that many authorities claim a level of costs greater than that charged by Southwark.</p> <p>The Council has also conducted its own internal review based upon legal advice as to the model for calculating the level of costs to be charged. This confirms that there is scope for the level of costs raised to be increased.</p>	Safeguards will exist to protect the most vulnerable groups of the community

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<p>Increase rate of recovery of Housing Benefit overpayments by 25%, as the new in-house service will prioritise this activity</p>	<p>Other</p>	<p>All groups within the community may be subject to action to recover overpayments of Housing Benefit</p> <p>The increased rate of recovery will not therefore disproportionately affect any particular group within the community.</p>	<p>Analysis of housing benefit, overpayments and recovery rates</p>	<p>The focus will be on maximising the recovery rate from those currently paying and increasing the number of individuals repaying 'overpayments' of housing benefit.</p> <p>In 2011/12 we will deliver a reduction in the level of new HB overpayment created through more effective management of our benefit caseload and by maximising use of matched data to identify and prevent overpayments.</p> <p>In addition the continued development of the One Touch service which sees new claimants interviewed as part of the New Claims process, further supports accuracy of claims and a Right first time approach.</p> <p>Existing safeguards to protect the vulnerable will remain in place, so where recovery arrangements are exposing a claimant, or his or her family, to severe hardship these will be reviewed. Measures available include agreeing sensible payment arrangements or consideration for write-off of uncollectible debts. Where such vulnerability is identified in claimant in the over 60 category specific assistance is available from the joint team.</p> <p>In addition, the proposed Southwark Benefit Advice Hub - a successor service to Joint Team and the former Welfare Rights Unit, due to come into</p>

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				existence from April 2011, will offer additional guidance and support to both the elderly and other vulnerable people of working age.
Increase income generation within Registrars by increasing current levels of business and offering additional enhancements to existing services.	Other	Statutory services will continue to be provided in accordance with relevant legislation; The proposed additional services and increase in business will not impact the provision of statutory services. These discretionary services will provide affordable and optional enhancements to customers without disproportionately advantaging or disadvantaging any particular group.	Analysis of Registrars service	No impact on statutory services
Organisational Development				
Review of staffing structure resulting in a reduction in the establishment.	Management structure/service reconfiguration	As specific proposals are put forward, and at each stage of implementation thereafter, the different impacts on different categories of staff will be assessed.	As specific proposals are put forward, and at each stage of implementation thereafter, the different impacts on different categories of staff will be assessed.	As specific proposals are put forward, and at each stage of implementation thereafter, the different impacts on different categories of staff will be assessed.
Review the provision of training, centralisation of services resulting in savings from cross-Council working and shared services.	Back office and support	As specific proposals are put forward, and at each stage of implementation thereafter, the different impacts on different categories of staff will be assessed.	As specific proposals are put forward, and at each stage of implementation thereafter, the different impacts on different categories of staff will be assessed.	As specific proposals are put forward, and at each stage of implementation thereafter, the different impacts on different categories of staff will be assessed.