

**IMPLEMENTING THE SERVICE REVIEW
YEAR 1 REVIEW, REGULATORY SERVICES**

1. PURPOSE

- 1.1** The Audit Committee have maintained a keen interest in the review of Regulatory Services over the last two years, and at the December 2011 Committee requested that a further paper be taken to the June Committee.
- 1.2** This paper satisfies the decision taken at the Committee on 9 December 2011 and highlights the considerable progress which has been undertaken to implement the Service Review outcomes within Regulatory Services.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1** That the Committee recognises the significant work and excellent progress which has been undertaken to implement the new redesigned service arrangements across Regulatory Services.
- 2.2** That the Committee agrees that the performance and outcomes achieved in Year 1 demonstrate the benefits achieved through the Service Review process and provides confidence that the service will be able to continue to improve and deliver the core statutory duties placed on the Council.
- 2.3** That the Committee recognises the steps taken to ensure continual improvement, with the creation of a Service Improvement Group which will take forward any outstanding issues from the Review and progress other service management and improvement issues, and governance arrangements to the Planning, Protective Services & Licensing Committee.

3. YEAR 1 REVIEW

- 3.1** The Service Review has been extensively reviewed after one year, to assess its impact to service delivery and the intended outcomes. The implementation phase has been resource intensive, with early transitional arrangements (which ceased in August 2011) and staff engagement through various thematic delivery groups. The Review involved consultation with stakeholders, customers and staff in addition

to the project plan and performance. The full report is detailed in Appendix I, and was agreed by the Regulatory Services Project Team on 31 May 2012.

3.2 The review has identified that there has been significant progress with delivery on the Service Review and that performance in this period has been good, despite the implementation being resource intensive and taking some staff away from operational work. The key achievements to note are :-

- (i) Against the target of 92%, we have achieved 93% of the implementation plan. The project tracker is attached in Appendix I (Appendix III of the report)
- (ii) The service redesign through the structural changes is complete, although there are presently two vacancies which are currently being pursued.
- (iii) The changes to service delivery have been made and to the debt counselling, antisocial noise, and general working arrangements, and have also included the implementation of a document management system and migration to the council Customer Management Centre.
- (iv) We have delivered the total budget savings of £259,172 and exceeded our target for maximising income through the new contract to deliver the shellfish biotoxin contract, our work in export certificates to China, and new partnership funding arrangements with other Local Authorities for the mobile anthrax incinerator.
- (v) We have continued to deliver our work, in addition to implement the service review. We have maintained or increased performance targets for 19 of the 24 indicators over previous years. Where performance has dropped, this has related to depleted resources or to inappropriate targets (eg, debt counselling).
- (vi) Customer satisfaction levels are positive, with 7 of the 9 surveys having satisfaction levels ranging from 93% to 100%. Of the other two, Environmental Health service request satisfaction levels have increased from 82% to 88% in 2011/2012, and Trading Standards have fallen to 78%. On further review, the Trading Standards feedback is based on a very low return rate, and also due to vacancies in the team, which will be resolved by August 2012.
- (vii) Stakeholder feedback remains positive. Of note is the very positive feedback from the Councils PPSL Committee considering the 2012-13 statutory service plans at their April Committee; UNISON have no issues, having been a member of the Project Team; and the review of the equalities and sustainability assessments indicates that the risks have been

effectively managed and are low risk.

- 3.3** There are also **cultural changes** from the Service Review, although these will take **some time to deliver**. Integral to our Review has been engagement with staff, and a recent staff survey indicated that communication has been positive but there is a need amongst some staff to get the Review finished and focus on operational work. Key outcomes from the survey are :-
- (i) 93% of staff rated the Staff Information Day as above average or excellent
 - (ii) They generally support the view that the structural changes are complete, with front-line resources being protected, and that our communication strategy is good. There is general support that staff wish to continue to be involved in delivery groups.
- 3.4** Other cultural changes include better integration and empowering Officers. Whilst progress is being made, supported by integrated management and the new teams, this will be progressed in our Service Improvement Plan.

4. OUTCOMES

- 4.1** The Service Review has been implemented successfully with staff engagement, and has achieved improvements to service delivery. We have protected front-line resources and in some cases, this has increased from previous staffing levels as many posts were frozen. Management has been rationalised and this has created some capacity issues in the last year. Work continues to clarify roles and responsibilities and to provide capacity for the rationalised management team to progress service issues.
- 4.2** Some work in the Review is still to be completed, notably improvements to the corporate licensing function, and benchmarking with other Local Authorities, both of which have suffered due to conflicting priorities.
- 4.3** Service improvement areas have been identified through the service planning process, and the recent self-assessment under the Public Services Improvement Framework (PSIF).
- 4.4** The Service Review is only one strand, and it is intended to take the outstanding issues forward, with other service improvement priorities, into a Service Improvement Plan delivered by a Business Improvement Team. This will comprise staff across the service and replace the current short-lived Service Review Project Team. The Business Improvement Team will report to the Regulatory Services Management Team, and ultimately the Planning, Protective Services and Licensing Committee. This proposal was agreed at the Project Team on 31 May 2012.

5. CONCLUSIONS

- 5.1** The Service Review of Regulatory Services has been effectively delivered and resulted in efficiencies and improvements to service delivery. Whilst there has been some reduction in performance, there has been a period of significant change and these issues will be actively managed in 2012/2013. The Review has been achieved without significant impact on service priorities, customer or stakeholder feedback, and with staff engagement.
- 5.2** The outstanding work from the service review is to be taken forward by a Regulatory Services Business Improvement Team. This will allow us to incorporate other service priorities into the workplan, including the development of a Balanced Score Card and the outcome of the recent Public Services Improvement Framework (PSIF) assessment of Planning and Regulatory Services. This group will comprise of a cross section of staff within the service, reporting to the Regulatory Service Management team; the Departmental Management Team and to the Planning, Protective Services and Licensing Committee. This affords a level of accountability.
- 5.3** It will take some time for the cultural changes to be fully implemented although much work has been done through our communication strategy, new roles and responsibilities, integration of teams, management and of aspects of each services work. This work will be ongoing and will focus on a range of issues including staff empowerment.

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