



Brent

Cabinet
19 June 2017

**Report from the
Strategic Director of Resources**

For Action

Wards Affected:
[ALL]

Applications Support with Lewisham Council

1.0 Summary

- 1.1. This report sets out proposals for joining the Applications Support teams across Brent and Lewisham. This will be an expansion to the shared ICT service established between Brent and the London Borough of Lewisham in April 2016.

2.0 Recommendations

- 2.1 That Cabinet approves the addition of the joint service for Applications Support to the scope of services to be covered by the current Shared Service Agreement in respect of ICT services with the London Borough of Lewisham and the merger of the two separate applications support teams across Brent and the London Borough of Lewisham.
- 2.2 That the Cabinet approves the delegation from the London Borough of Lewisham to Brent (as the host authority) of the delivery of the Applications Support Service under the terms of the existing Shared Service Agreement in respect of ICT services.
- 2.3 That the Cabinet delegates authority to the Strategic Director Resources in consultation with the Lead Member for Resources to agree the terms for variation to the existing Shared Service Agreement in respect of ICT services between Brent and the London Borough of Lewisham and to approve the final form of Variation to effect the addition of the Applications Support Service and the related transfer of staff.
- 2.3 That Cabinet approves the transfer of Applications Support staff from the London Borough of Lewisham to Brent pursuant to Transfer of Undertakings (Protection of Employment) Regulations 2006.

3.0 Detail

- 3.1 Cabinet approved a report in November 2015 recommending that the London Boroughs of Brent and Lewisham establish a shared ICT service by April 2016. The purpose was to contribute to the savings target for Digital Services whilst establishing a strong and sustainable ICT service for both authorities.
- 3.2 The shared ICT service has now been running for 14 months and is deemed to be a success, based on user feedback and service reviews undertaken. The cost of running the Brent ICT service has reduced by approximately £1m, savings which can be directly attributed to the merger of the two services.
- 3.3 It is now considered that further synergies and efficiencies can be made by merging the two application support teams for the councils. Should the merger be approved, it is proposed that Lewisham's staff currently providing the application support will transfer to Brent pursuant to the Transfer of Undertakings (Protection of Employment) Regulations 2006 ("TUPE") on the basis of their existing terms and conditions.
- 3.4 It is not anticipated that there will be direct financial savings made immediately as a result of the merger. Instead the advantage of the merger in the short term is that the service will be more robust and resilient as there will be more staff, at no additional costs, to provide support for the applications in a more cohesive manner across the shared ICT service.
- 3.4 There are a number of applications which Brent and Lewisham have in common, e.g. IDOX planning system, SharePoint, Business Objects. Therefore, there will be an increase in the number of people who will be available to provide support, increasing resilience in the support of applications.
- 3.5 There are a number of applications which are unique to each Council; it is recognised that having a small number of people (sometimes just one individual) responsible for supporting key applications has been a risk in the support model within each Council. With a programme of knowledge sharing, training and development, staff can increase their skills base and will be able to cross train and provide cover for applications, other than those they have traditionally covered.
- 3.6 A restructure of the ICT shared service was undertaken during early 2016, at that time this excluded the Lewisham applications support team. At the current time it is not the intention to restructure further.
- 3.7 The post of Head of Applications Support (which has been held vacant) will be appointed and the post holder will be responsible for bringing the team together and fostering the knowledge sharing necessary to ensure that the team operate effectively. The Head of Applications Support will be based across the two Councils.
- 3.8 Staff will not be expected to change their current place of work, however there may be the need to attend occasional team meetings etc and these could take place in either Brent or Lewisham and staff will be expected to attend. It is not envisaged that these will occur too often.

.4.0 Financial Implications

- 4.1 It is anticipated that there will not be any additional costs associated with the merger. There will not be any redundancy implications as the proposal is to TUPE staff over but not change the main location or job roles.
- 4.2 The intention is for staff to be transferred to Brent from Lewisham. Brent will continue to pay for the Applications Support staff it currently employs. In addition the staff transferring to Brent will be on the Brent payroll and paid for by Brent but Lewisham will reimburse Brent for those staff that work solely on Lewisham applications.
- 4.3 As the service consolidates and the impact of working on a cross Borough basis increases, then Lewisham and Brent will share the costs of the relevant application support staff jointly.
- 4.4 The projected salary spend associated with these staff is c£1.2m. Although the staff will be paid by Brent, Lewisham will be responsible for these costs and there is no net increase in Brent's expenditure.

5.0 Legal Implications

- 5.1 The current ICT Shared Service operated between Brent and Lewisham Councils was established under the statutory framework which permits local authorities to collaborate and share provision of services pursuant to the Local Government Acts 1972 and 2000, the Localism Act 2011 and the Local Authorities (Arrangement for Discharge of Functions) (England) Regulations 2012.
- 5.2 In view of the fact that the proposed transfer of staff involves in excess of 20 staff members, Cabinet approval to such transfer is required pursuant to Part 4 of the Council's Constitution.
- 5.3 The formal Collaboration Agreement between Lewisham and Brent Councils sets out both parties' respective duties and liabilities in relation to the current Shared Service. A variation or amendment to the Collaboration Agreement will be needed to amend the Agreed Service scope to include the joint Applications Support Service and to add to the list of Transferred Staff for the purpose of the Shared Service. In view of the value of the proposed arrangement as detailed in paragraph [4.4] (projected value of service being £1.2m per annum) Cabinet approval is required to the variation to the partnership/collaborative arrangements.

6.0 Procurement and Employment matters

- 6.1 Both Councils understand that Lewisham's staff currently providing the application support will transfer to Brent pursuant to TUPE on their existing terms and conditions.
- 6.2 If any future restructures are undertaken redundancies may be necessary, however, this is not currently planned. It is not possible to estimate any cost impact at this time as the future organisational requirements are currently unknown.

6.3 Arrangements are in place to provide employee liability information under the TUPE regulations since it is a requirement that such information be provided by the transferor of staff prior to any TUPE transfer. Lewisham HR is aware of this requirement and has confirmed it can provide the necessary employee liability information once Cabinet has given approval to the transfer. TUPE also requires provision of information and consultation with affected staff about the prospective transfer and Lewisham HR has confirmed that that this is being undertaken in accordance with TUPE requirements.

7.0 **Equalities Implications.**

7.1 As the current staff are transferring to Brent there are no equalities implications, however an equalities impact assessment will be undertaken as part of any future restructure exercise which may follow.

8.0 **Staffing/Accommodation Implications**

8.1 In terms of accommodation implications it is anticipated that the joint team will not increase significantly, the only addition being the appointment to the current vacant post of Head of Application Support. As staff will remain in their current work locations, there is no impact on accommodation.

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