

<b>Committee</b>	<b>Date:</b>
<b>Establishment Committee</b>	17 October 2017
<b>Subject:</b> Comptroller and City Solicitor's Departmental Business Plan 2017-2018 Progress report as at 30 September 2017	<b>Public</b>
<b>Report of:</b> Michael Cogher	<b>For Information</b>
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### Summary

The purpose of this report is to provide a summary of progress toward achieving the aims and objectives of the Comptroller and City Solicitor's Departmental Business Plan 2017-2018.

Progress toward achieving the strategic aims and objectives are as follows:

- a) To manage resources effectively to provide efficient and high quality legal services.

The department remained within its local risk budget at the year-end including delivery of the 2016/17 Service Based Review (SBR) savings of £169k and has delivered the total required 2014-2018 £377k SBR savings.

Following an external assessment on 29-30 June 2017 the department was re-accredited with the Law Society's LEXCEL quality assurance standard. The assessment identified a high level of compliance and many areas of excellent practice.

- b) To tailor our services to meet the needs of, and add value to the transformation and modernisation agenda and be an exemplar of innovative good practice to combine "the best of the old with the best of the new"

The Information Management Project has progressed to the stage of procurement which went live on 25 September 2017 the aim is for the new system to be operational in April 2018. It is anticipated that the replacement legal case management system will deliver smarter leaner processes, improved client information and communication and facilitate a significant shift to paper light working.

## **Recommendation**

1. Members are asked to note the report.

## **Main Report**

### **Background**

1. The Establishment Committee approved the Business Plan on 19 June 2017 this report provides an update on progress toward achieving the aims and objectives of the Comptroller and City Solicitor's Departmental Business Plan 2017-2018.

### **Current Position**

2. The improvement objectives are:

- 2.1 Achieve the Service Based Review (SBR) target.

The departmental SBR target for 2016/17 was £169k out of a total of £377k for the period 2014-2018. Due to the increased demand for legal support and advice it was not possible to achieve the allocated £49k saving in staffing costs and this saving was instead loaded into the external income target. The 2016/17 income at the year end exceeded the 2016/17 £169k savings target and the service therefore met the overall SBR target of £377k in 2016/17.

- 2.2 Achieve re-accreditation to the Law Society LEXCEL standard.

The service undertook a full assessment against the LEXCEL standard in June 2017 resulting in re-accreditation with a high level of compliance and with many areas of good practice identified. Internal monitoring against the LEXCEL standard is on-going.

- 2.3 Complete a major information management project.

Significant progress has been made toward procuring and implementing a replacement legal case management, the project was paused to ensure that the technical implications of the corporate information technology transformation programme were fully understood and the requirements incorporated into the system specification. Procurement of the system commenced on 25 September 2017 the objective is for the system to go live in April 2018.

It is anticipated that the system will facilitate smarter leaner processes and will deliver improved client information and communication, excellent standards of records management and will facilitate paper light working.

- 2.4 Undertake business process analysis at each quarter.

This action has been paused pending the deployment of the replacement case management system which will provide the necessary data for analysis to inform business process reviews, focus groups will review specific target areas of

activity and develop opportunities to support change and the modernisation of business processes.

### **Corporate & Strategic Implications**

- 3 The service provides effective legal advice and support to enable service departments to achieve specific corporate and strategic aims and to protect the City's interests. The Business Plan aligns to the City's key policy priorities as follows:-

KPP1 – Supporting and promoting the UK financial based services sector throughout the world for the benefit of the wider UK economy.

KPP2 – Improving the value for money of our services within the constraints of reduced resources.

- 4 The Departmental Performance Indicators and current position are listed in Appendix A.

### **Finance**

- 5 The service effectively monitored and controlled expenditure to remain within its local risk budget at the 2016/17 year-end.

In the current year there is a risk of a local risk budget overspend, the key causes are the requirement to recruit to long vacant lawyer posts to meet the increased volume and complexity in demand for legal advice particularly in the Property and Public & Corporate law areas of activity, this combined with year on year absorbed costs of employee salary increments and annual pay awards averaging at 52k per annum without proportional budget uplift to fund these additional costs. External legal fee income is forecast to achieve the local risk budget target of £832k.

### **Strategic Risk Management**

- 6 Strategic and Operational Risks are reviewed by the Department's Senior Management Team on a monthly basis. The latest strategic risk report is included in a separate report.

### **Conclusion**

- 7 The department is on course to achieve the 2017/2018 business plan objectives.

## Appendices

- Appendix 1 – Comptroller & City Solicitor – Performance Indicators 2016/17

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### Appendix A

#### Comptroller & City Solicitor - Performance Indicators (2017/2018)

Ref	Performance Indicator	Target and progress for 2017/2018	Position at 30 September 2017
PI 1	Responses of chairmen of committee to the client care survey give a 'high overall service' rating	Target 98%	Achieved - 99% January 2017 Next survey 2018
PI 2	Responses of departments to the client care survey give a 'high quality service' rating	Target 98%	Achieved 99% January 2017 Next survey 2018
PI 3	Responses of departments to the client care survey give a 'staff keep you well informed' rating	Target 93%	Achieved 93% January 2017 Next survey 2018
PI 4	Justified complaints against total caseload	Target – maximum of 5 per annum	On target at Q2 0 complaints received
PI 5	Maintain LEXCEL accreditation	LEXCEL accreditation achieved	Re-accreditation achieved June 2017
PI 6	File reviews completed in a timely fashion	Target - 90% within one month	Below target 86% at Q2
PI 7	Inactivity on live files in 6 months	Target – Not more than 15%	Achieved 13% at Q2
PI 8	Inactivity on live files in 3 months	Target – Not more than 20%	Achieved 19% at Q2
PI 9	Overall chargeable hours target	Target 100%	On target for 100%
PI 10	Effectively managing short term sickness absence	Target – Below City short term average	Below target CCS 0.36 days CoL average 0.32 days
PI 11	Percentage of FoI requests responded to in under 20 days	Target 96%	Above target 98.9%