

<b>Committees:</b> Policy and Resources Establishment Committee	<b>Dates:</b> 21 November 2013 28* November 2013	<b>Item no.</b>
<b>Subject:</b> <b>Business Plan Progress Report (1<sup>st</sup> July to 31<sup>st</sup> October 2013)</b> Town Clerk's Office (Policy and Democratic Services)		
<b>Report of:</b> Town Clerk	<b>Public For Information</b>	
<p style="text-align: center;"><b><u>Summary</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• This report provides an activity update as at 31 October 2013 on progress towards achieving the objectives set out in the Town Clerk's Business Plan.</li> <li>• Objectives due for delivery within this reporting period such as phase 2 of the induction of the new Members and an element of the London agenda program have been completed.</li> <li>• Major pieces of work scheduled for the rest of the year such as the continuing program of work associated with the Service Based Reviews and the review of support for Members are proceeding according to plan.</li> <li>• Performance within the division is at or above the performance level standards set within the Business Plan.</li> <li>• A financial monitoring statement that covers the period 1 April 2013 to 30 September 2013 can be found at paragraph 13. It is expected that the Division will remain within its local risk resources in this financial year.</li> </ul> <p><b>Recommendation</b></p> <p>That Members note the content of this report.</p>		

### **Main Report**

#### **Introduction**

1. The Town Clerk's Office lies at the centre of the City Corporation's strategic management processes, helping to shape the development of corporate policy and strategy. It provides corporate leadership and co-ordination at officer level. The Town Clerk's Office is also responsible for promoting high standards of corporate governance and providing support to Members and Committees. The section consists of Committee and Member Services, Corporate Policy and Performance, Corporate HR, Resilience and Community Safety, and a Business Support Unit.

#### **Key Developments**

2. Satisfactory progress has been made towards achieving the actions detailed in the plan. Some of the highlights are listed below.
3. **The London Agenda** - This concerns the work that the City Corporation does for the benefit of London as a whole and whether that offer can be improved. A strand of this work concerns the City's new Education Strategy 2013-15, which

has now been approved by Court. It sets out a vision for the City to promote high quality education for all. It is not confined to the Square Mile and outlines how the City can strengthen its existing school provision, particularly around providing greater support to its academies in neighbouring boroughs. It also recognises the role the City can play in supporting young people into employment through making use of the businesses and training that City institutions have to offer.

4. **Service Based Reviews** - This project is being jointly led by the Chamberlain and the Deputy Town Clerk. This department has been supporting the service based review process, through representation on each of the Chief Officer led review groups, and the Steering Group. Following the recent report to the Resource Allocation Sub-Committee, phase 2 of the process will be the development of more detailed options through a series of challenge meetings with individual Chief Officers. These options will be presented for Member consideration at the December meeting of the Resource Allocation Sub Committee.
5. **The Cultural Hub.** - The City has a world class offering of cultural institutions in and around the Barbican area, including the Barbican Centre, Museum of London and the Guildhall School. Accessibility and visibility remain key issues for these institutions and the creation of a visible cultural hub seeks to address this through providing an infrastructure and environment that guides visitors to this part of the City. The Department of the Built Environment are consulting on a revised Barbican area strategy and it is being recommended to the Policy and Resources Committee that a working party be established to guide and coordinate this project.
6. **Improving support for Committees and Members** - The changes associated with retirement of an Assistant Town Clerk are well on the way to completion. The aim to add capacity to the team and improve the standard of service offered should be achieved. Changes of personnel have been minimised to provide continuity of support to Members.
7. **Member Development** - An all Member survey was conducted in September 2013 to seek views on their development needs. The results of the survey will be reported to the Member Development Steering Group on December 6<sup>th</sup>. A new strategy is currently being developed, informed by the survey, with the aim to roll out the new arrangements by April next year.
8. **The Hampstead Heath Ponds Project** - Working with stakeholders, the City's designers have now produced two sets of preferred options for the Hampstead and Highgate chains of ponds. It is anticipated that these preferred options will be subject to public consultation from December 2013 - February 2014. The current timetable is:
  - Planning application submitted to LB Camden: May/June 2014
  - Commence of works on site: October 2014
  - Completion of works: March 2016Mitigation of the risk of dam failure continues as far as possible until the completion of the dams project. The project is continuing to progress with "all deliberate speed" as advised by Counsel.
9. **Performance Monitoring** - The Town Clerk's Office has performed at or above the various performance level standards that were identified within the Business Plan.

## Resource Issues

10. A summary of Policy and Democratic Services' budgetary position, for the quarter ended 30<sup>th</sup> September, is provided below. It is expected that the division will remain within its local risk resources in this financial year.

### Town Clerk's Office - (Policy and Democratic Services)

Local risk budgetary statement for the quarter ended 30<sup>th</sup> September 2013

Section	Original 2013/14  £000	Budget for Year to Date  £000	Actual  £000	Variance YTD Ad/(Fav) £000	Notes
Town Clerk's Office (Committee & Corporate HR)	6,751	3,473	3,208	(265)	1.
Security and Contingency Planning	603	302	295	(7)	
Total	7,354	3,775	3,503	(272)	

**Notes** - The current underspend in the Town Clerk's Office relates mainly to the addition of agreed carry forward amounts (which will be used against specific projects), and a series of vacancies that will be filled.