

Committee	Date:
Establishment Committee	28 October 2015
Subject: Comptroller and City Solicitor's Departmental Business Plan 2015-2018 – Progress Report as at 30 September 2015	Public
Report of: Comptroller and City Solicitor	For Information

Summary

The purpose of this report is provide an update on the progress made in achieving the Strategic Aims in the Comptroller and City Solicitor's Departmental Business Plan 2015 - 2018 (as at 30 September 2015 – end of Q2).

Progress on achieving my Strategic Aims was as follows:-

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

The department following an external assessment on 15 and 16 June 2015 was recommended to be re-accredited with the Law Society's quality award LEXCEL.

Membership of the London Boroughs Legal Alliance continues to generate savings on counsel fee expenditure via the competitively tendered frameworks.

I anticipate remaining within my Local Risk budget at the year-end including achieving Service Based Review savings of £22k.

My strategic risks have been reviewed and updated. The risk relating to the implementation of the Oracle OPN commercial rents system has been reduced from red to amber in my departmental risk register. See separate report.

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

The Professional Services Protocol has been implemented in eleven departments and workflow reports are being circulated to clients each quarter.

A periodic personal information audit has been completed and security around office based information has been strengthened. Comprehensive reviews on the way we work and information management are underway.

Recommendation

The Committee is recommended to note the report.

Main Report

Background

1. The Establishment Committee approved my 2015 - 2018 Business Plan on 14 May 2015. This report provides an update on the progress made towards achieving my Strategic Aims and other key information as at 30 September 2015 (end of 2nd Quarter).

Current Position

2. My Improvement Objectives are:-

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

A1. Achieve the Service Based Review (SBR) target

The departmental SBR savings target for 2015/16 is £22k (out of a total of £377k by 2017/2018). The savings this year will be achieved by reducing employee costs mainly where posts are filled at lower spinal points.

A2. Participate in the London Borough's Legal Alliance (LBLA) Barrister Framework retender

The existing LBLA framework is generating a saving of up to 20% on the use of counsel. My senior managers are participating in the re-tendering exercise to ensure that similar (or greater) savings are achievable in the future.

A3. Achieve accreditation to the new Law Society's LEXCEL standard (version 6)

The Department recently underwent an external two day assessment and the assessor is recommending to the Law Society that the Department is re-accredited with the LEXCEL standard.

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

B1. Develop the Professional Services Protocol (PSP) initiative to continue to develop clearly understood solicitor/client relationship and performance standards with all our clients

The PSP was launched approximately twelve months ago and client departments welcomed clarification of the engagement process between lawyers in the Department and officers who instruct us. In addition, client departments receive a quarterly usage report which provides their senior managers with visibility of the range of legal services provided and time incurred.

B2. Participate in New Ways of Working including Information Management

The Department is seeking to improve its case management and information processes. An internal working group has been convened to review the use of existing technology and manual processes to determine a future roadmap for the next three years. The major aim of this process is to make better use of technology to manage the life cycle of legal transactions.

B3. Undertake a review of our work processes in order to maximise efficiency

The review is looking critically at current practices with the aim of implementing best practice and delivering legal advice effectively which meets the expectation of clients.

Strategic Implications

3. As a central department, the Department enables front line service departments to achieve specific corporate Strategic Aims and Objectives and the Department Business Plan links directly 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. My Departmental Performance Indicators (and current position) are listed in Appendix A.

Finance

5. I anticipate keeping within my Local Risk budget at the year end. An additional post has been filled in my Property Division to undertake work in relation to the City Surveyor's property disposal project. My Public and Corporate Law Division is seeking to recruit to a new post in relation to increased planning work.
6. It should be noted that my Finance Section have, following a very challenging few months, successfully billed the second quarter's commercial rent charges (September) using the new Oracle OPN commercial rents system and, have significantly reduced the backlog of work from February this year.

Strategic Risk Management

7. 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.
8. It should be noted that risk CCS4 relates to the corporate ERP project (CBIS upgrade and Manhattan replacement project) which has been reduced to amber following the successful September OPN quarterly billing run.

Conclusion

9. I consider that the department made very good progress in achieving the 2015/2018 business plan objectives.

Appendices

- Appendix 1 – Comptroller and City Solicitor’s Department – Performance Indicators (2015/2016)

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Appendix 1

Comptroller & City Solicitor - Performance Indicators (2015/2016)

Ref	Performance Indicator	Targets for 2015/2016	<i>Position As at 30 Sep 2015</i>
PI 1	Responses of chairmen of committee to the client care survey give a 'high overall service' rating	Target 98%	<i>Achieved - 100% (December 2014) Next survey January 2015</i>
PI 2	Responses of departments to the client care survey give a 'high quality service' rating	Target 98%	<i>Achieved – 100% (December 2014) Next survey January 2015</i>
PI 3	Responses of departments to the client care survey give a 'staff keep you well informed' rating	Target 93%	<i>Achieved - 92% (December 2014) Next survey January 2015</i>
PI 4	Justified complaints against total caseload	Target – maximum of 5 per annum	<i>1 complaint received (settled at 1st stage – not justified)</i>
PI 5	Maintain LEXCEL accreditation	Target – Accreditation	<i>Achieved June 2015</i>
PI 6	File reviews completed in a timely fashion	Target - 90% within one month	<i>Achieved 65% 25% below target</i>
PI 7	Inactivity on live files in 6 months	Target – Not more than 15%	<i>Achieved 13% 2% above target</i>
PI 8	Inactivity on live files in 3 months	Target – Not more than 20%	<i>Achieved 23% 3% below target</i>
PI 9	Individual chargeable hours target	Target 100%	<i>Achieved</i>
PI 10	Effectively managing short term sickness absence	Target – Below City target of 6 days	<i>Achieved C&CS 4.11 days Sep14-Aug15</i>