

Committee: Establishment Committee	Date: 4 February 2016
Subject: Comptroller and City Solicitor's Departmental Business Plan 2015-2018 – Progress Report as at 31 December 2015	Public
Report of: Comptroller and City Solicitor	For Information
Report Author: Martin Howe	

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 2015 - 2018 (as at 31 December 2015 – end of Q3).

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 £43k.

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 data protection audit has been completed and security around office based information has been strengthened.

A comprehensive review on the way we work is underway and an Opportunity Outline in relation to Information Management will shortly be submitted to the Corporate Projects Board for approval.

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 31 December 2015 (end of 3rd 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 £43 k (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 have participated in the framework re-tendering exercise to ensure that similar savings will be sustained.

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

The Department, following an external two day assessment, has been re-accredited with the Law Society's 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 particularly the life cycle of electronic information. An internal working group has been convened and is submitting an Opportunity Outline proposal to the Corporate Projects Board shortly for approval.

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.

Strategic Risk Management

6. Strategic and Operational Risks are reviewed by the Department's Senior Management Team on a monthly basis. Information about C&CS risk is contained in a separate report.

Conclusion

7. 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)

PI 1	Responses of chairmen of committee to the client care survey give 'very good' or 'good' overall service' rating	Target 98% <i>(Achieved 100%- Jan 2015 – 2% above target). 2015 figures due Feb 2016</i>
PI 2	Responses of departments to the client care survey give a 'high quality service' rating	Target 98% <i>(Achieved 100%- Jan 2015 – 2% above target). 2015 figures due Feb 2016</i>
PI 3	Responses of departments to the client care survey give a 'staff keep you well informed' rating	Target 93% <i>(Achieved 92%- Jan 2015 – 1% below target). 2015 figures due Feb 2016</i>
PI 4	Justified complaints against total caseload	Target – maximum of 5 per annum <i>(Achieved – 1 complaint received – settled at 1st stage – complaint not upheld)</i>
PI 5	Maintain LEXCEL accreditation	Target – Re-accreditation <i>(Achieved June 2015)</i>
PI 6	File reviews completed in a timely fashion	Target - 90% within one month <i>(Achieved 75% - 15% below target)</i>
PI 7	Inactivity on live files in 6 months	Target – Not more than 15% <i>(Achieved 11% Q3 – 4% above target)</i>
PI 8	Inactivity on live files in 3 months	Target – Not more than 20% <i>(Achieved 26% Q3 – 6% below target)</i>
PI 9	Individual chargeable hours target	Target 100% <i>(Achieved 104% Q3 – 4% above target)</i>
PI 10	Effectively managing short term sickness absence	Target – Below City average <i>(Achieved (3.76 days)) – 1.35 days below corporate short and long term sickness absence Nov14-Nov15)</i>
PI 11	Pay invoices equal or better than City average – monitored monthly Note: a major part of the process to pay invoices is undertaken by the CLPS. PI's relate to the processes undertaken by the C&CS.	Target - Within 30 days - City target 98% - <i>(Achieved – average 99%)</i> Target - Small Business – within 10 days <i>(Achieved – average 80%)</i>