

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE
ONESOURCE JOINT COMMITTEE
Civic Offices, Watling Street, Bexley
20 January 2017 (10.05 - 11.45 am)**

Present:

Councillors Lester Hudson (Chair), +Joy Laguda, Donald Massey, Ron Ower, Melvin Wallace and Tonii Wilson were present.

+substitute member: Councillor Joy Laguda (for Forhad Hussain).

An apology for absence was received for Councillors Forhad Hussain and Damian White.

There were no declarations of interest.

An announcement was made explaining the evacuation procedures in the event of an emergency.

18 MINUTES

The minutes of the meetings of the Joint Committee held on 14 and 21 October 2016 were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

19 ONESOURCE FORECAST FINANCIAL POSITION AS AT NOVEMBER 2016

It was stated that the oneSource shared forecast financial position showed a projected overspend of £111k as at November 2016, period eight. This was in the context of savings of £9.4m having been applied to shared budgets since oneSource's inception in 2014/15 and therefore meant that savings of £9.29m would have been achieved by the end of 2016/17. The forecasted split between the three boroughs was £46k to Havering, £71k to Bexley and a credit of £6k to Newham.

As at period eight, the services managed by oneSource, but not shared had forecasted a balanced budget overall with minor variances; £1k for Newham, £6k for Havering and a nil variance for Bexley. This was in the context of savings of approximately £700k being removed from Havering non-shared budgets and £3.2m being removed from Newham non-shared budgets since the start of oneSource.

The Joint Committee noted the current oneSource forecasted outturn position based on the financial monitoring as at the end of November 2016.

20 **ONESOURCE UPDATE FOR JANUARY 2017**

The report before the Joint Committee covered a number of oneSource transformation updates.

Members noted that the proposed upgrade to Oracle Cloud was close to approval. The upgrade was critical in providing increased functionality for staff across the partner Councils.

In terms of customer satisfaction there had been a minor drop of 7% in the overall ratings; that drop had been anticipated however following a number of restructures across oneSource and a significant IT implementation in Newham. It was agreed that a Member survey would be include in the next customer satisfaction round.

It was reported that a number of commercial opportunities were being discussed with interested parties with updates provided at the next meeting of the Joint Committee.

The Joint Committee noted the report.

21 **PROPOSAL TO TRANSFER NEWHAM'S COUNCIL TAX AND BENEFITS SERVICE BACK TO THE COUNCIL**

The Joint Committee was informed that the Mayor of Newham was in the process of requesting to the London Boroughs of Havering and Bexley to transfer the Newham Council Tax and Benefits service from oneSource and into Newham Council's responsibility.

It was explained that once the Mayor had formally made the decision to make the request, Havering and Bexley Councils would be asked to approve the transfer. There was no immediate cost of the proposal however it was explained that oneSource would potentially not be able to deliver the full savings that had been anticipated in the original oneSource business case in relation to the Council Tax and Benefits service in Havering.

It was noted that London Borough of Bexley had not previously assumed savings from joint working.

The Joint Committee

1. noted the Mayor of Newham's intention to request to Havering and Bexley Councils to remove Newham's Council Tax and Benefits service from the Joint Committee and Delegation Agreement
2. noted that the two councils would have 20 business days to respond to the request once it was received.

3. noted that each Council would separately assess the financial impact of the decision from their individual perspectives, ie to request withdrawal (Newham) or to accept the proposal (Havering & Bexley).
4. noted that oneSource needed to develop new savings plans for Havering to replace those not deliverable through a shared Council Tax and Benefit arrangement with Newham.

22 ONESOURCE LEGAL SERVICES : OVERVIEW 2016/17

With the agreement of the Chairman, the report was submitted for consideration as an urgent matter pursuant to Section 100B (4) of the Local Government Act 1972 as it was essential for Members to receive an updated position on the resourcing of the legal service at the earliest available opportunity.

The report before Members provided an overview of the oneSource Legal Service provided to Newham and Havering Councils, its current position with regards to resourcing and future plans.

Members noted that despite major challenges around resourcing and managing demand within budget, the Service had made significant progress in delivering a high quality and client focussed legal service. Significant savings had been made following a restructure, however that had to be balanced against increasing demand for use of the Service.

A significant step forward had been the decision to join the London Boroughs Legal Alliance (a network of 17 London boroughs legal services). This had brought savings on external legal spending by Havering and Newham Councils on barristers and external firms of solicitors who were procured via framework agreements at reduced rates.

In addition, the oneSource structure meant that Legal Services now had to operate in a commercially focussed way, demonstrating value for money. This culture change had taken time to bed in but was now embraced by the Service.

The Joint Committee noted the report.

Chairman

