

## ONESOURCE JOINT COMMITTEE

21 October 2016

Subject heading:

oneSource update for October  
2016

Report author and contact details:

Jane West  
[jane.west@onesource.co.uk](mailto:jane.west@onesource.co.uk)  
020 3373 2703

Financial summary:

This report provides an update of  
current activity across oneSource.

Is this a Key Decision?

No

### SUMMARY

The report covers:-

- The Council Tax and Housing Benefits review.
- The strategic direction in relation to 1Oracle.
- An update on customer satisfaction.
- A summary of a recent internal communications survey.
- An update on commercial development.

It does not cover the budget or the transformation projects which are detailed in separate reports on this agenda

### RECOMMENDATIONS

The Joint Committee is asked to note the report.

## REPORT DETAIL

### 1. Background

- 1.1 The report sets out the main areas of activity across oneSource over the last two months.

### 2. Council Tax and Housing Benefits

- 2.1 It has previously been reported that a review was underway of Council Tax and Housing Benefits. oneSource is due to deliver savings of £1.32 million from this area by 2017/18 in Newham and Havering.
- 2.2 This review is currently on hold for two reasons:
- the Mayor of Newham has asked the Council Services to Small Businesses (CSSB) development unit in Newham to undertake an options appraisal to consider, alongside other options, spinning Newham's Council Tax and Housing Benefit service out into a small business. The CSSB team are utilising the work we had initially done as part of our review and are including the options we considered as well as the ones they have added, such as spinning the service out. We expect this review to be completed by the end of October.
  - Havering is developing a Digital Strategy which also covers customer services. A significant element of Council Tax and Housing Benefit activity takes place within Havering's Customer Services Centre (face to face and telephone contact). Any changes to the oneSource Council Tax and Housing Benefit Service needs to be in the context of any new Digital Strategy.
- 2.3 The pause on the review has put the £1.32 million savings at risk. We are currently examining opportunities to deliver them within the context of these uncertainties but without the ability to share services it is proving difficult for us to deliver the anticipated level of savings.
- 2.4 Similar CSSB options appraisals are anticipated over the next twelve months.

### 3. 1Oracle

- 3.1 oneSource is considering the strategic direction for the finance and HR systems in Newham, Havering and Bexley for the next 7-10 years. We are working closely with the other 1Oracle councils (Brent, Lambeth, Croydon, Lewisham and Barking and Dagenham) plus the City of London on a visioning exercise led by SOCITM, the local authority ICT professional society.
- 3.2 Oracle organised and hosted a number of in-depth workshops over the summer period to demonstrate their new Cloud offer to Subject Matter Experts from the councils. Attendance has been very good and the feedback from these has been very positive. We are also undertaking a high level financial analysis of the cost of the Oracle in the Cloud offer compared to current costs but also other options open to the councils eg Agresso in the Cloud. We expect to have this completed by November.
- 3.3 The new Cloud offer is very exciting because it changes the look and feel of the system to what you would expect from a twenty first century system. The finance and HR systems can be accessed through Apps on people's mobile phones and work very much like the Apps we all use in our private lives eg Amazon, Zoopla, Trip Advisor etc. Oracle have pre-empted the needs of local authority customers and are currently developing the additional

functionality we need such as Teachers' Pensions Returns. But you very much get what you are given with no opportunity to configure the system locally (in the same way we don't get to configure Amazon to our own liking). We were expecting this to be a barrier but the SMEs have embraced the need to change our ways of working to match the system rather than vice versa.

- 3.4 Security is often also seen as a barrier but Oracle offer two versions of Oracle in the Cloud. One is a commercial offer that companies like BT use. The other is a highly secure government version that is more expensive. Local authorities that are ahead of us are currently examining the commercial offer and the general view is that this is secure enough for their needs. The 10 Oracle councils held a workshop to look at the security of Oracle in the Cloud at Oracle's Reading site and have commissioned Gartner to compare the two offers. The report is expected within the next couple of weeks.
- 3.5 Havering and Newham's contract with Cap Gemini runs out in two years so it is important we have a strategic direction of travel and associated business case for Havering and Newham agreed by Christmas. We are also looking at our options for extending the usage of the current systems should the councils not be ready to, or not wish to, move to the new solution by 1 April 2018.
- 3.6 oneSource is also leading on the development of a strategic direction of travel for Bexley which currently uses Oracle Financials but the timetable for this is longer as there is no contract date looming.

#### **4 Customer Satisfaction**

- 4.1 The most recent Customer Satisfaction Survey closed a short time ago. The preliminary results are disappointing as satisfaction is down overall but this is perhaps not surprising given the extent of change that oneSource has experienced over the last eight months. Responses from managers were down very significantly, particularly within oneSource itself. A full service by service analysis will be provided in a report to the Joint Committee at a later date.
- 4.2 Having spent the last year removing cost, the oneSource Management Team is focussing on improving customer satisfaction significantly over the next twelve months. A number of initiatives are underway to achieve this:-
  - Newham has established a Stakeholder Group which has met three times, with and without oneSource, to work on improving client/customer relationships. The general view is that the group is having a positive impact on relationships.
  - Havering's Senior Leadership Team have agreed to set up a similar group.
  - Both these groups will be receiving draft service level agreements from each oneSource service at the end of October for consultation before final sign off. The aim of the SLAs is to increase the transparency of what service is offered for the core funding and what is not provided or can only be provided at additional cost.
  - 10 Oracle Customer Boards have been established in both Newham and Havering (Bexley's system is older and more established).
  - oneSource is supporting the development of the Newham small businesses and has been chosen to deliver a number of services to the new companies that have gone live. A brochure is available on request.
  - Further analysis will be undertaken, team by team, to understand the negative customer feedback from the last survey and put in place interventions to improve particular services. A further survey will be completed in March and extra effort will be made to improve the number of responses.

#### **5 Internal Communications feedback**

- 5.1 Havering ran an internal communications survey a few months ago. oneSource expanded this to its staff in Newham and Bexley, with some adjustment to the questions.
- 5.2 The survey shows staff to feel:-
- reasonably well informed about the three councils
  - fairly happy with communication within their team
  - on balance, advocates of the councils and oneSource.
- 5.3 These are qualified findings though because a large proportion of staff chose the option of 'neither agree nor disagree'.
- 5.4 Management of change is a weakness with 38% of staff disagreeing that change is well managed. Working between teams across oneSource scored badly as well with 37% disagreeing that communication between teams is good.
- 5.5 On a more positive note, only 15% of staff were actually dissatisfied with working for their council or oneSource.
- 5.6 These results have been presented to the oneSource managers at an awayday and a cross-team group is being established to work on the areas of weakness corporately. In addition, all management teams have been asked to develop their own action plans.

## **6 Commercial opportunities**

- 6.1 Although internal customer satisfaction is the focus, oneSource is still working to keep up its external profile. Events where we have participated to date include CIPFA Conference, the Solace Summit and the IRRV Conference. Others on the horizon include a national Shared Services Conference, a summit with Orbis and LGSS sponsored by LGA and the Zurich Municipal Customer Conference.
- 6.2 In addition, we have regular meetings in the diary with various boroughs in East London and beyond where some specific opportunities are being explored. An update can be provided at the meeting.

## **IMPLICATIONS AND RISKS**

### **Financial implications and risks:**

There are no immediate financial implications other than those identified in the body of the report.

### **Legal implications and risks:**

There are no immediate legal implications identified for this report.

### **Human Resources implications and risks:**

There are no immediate hr implications identified for this report.

**Equalities implications and risks:**

There are no immediate equality implications identified for this report.

**BACKGROUND PAPERS**

**None**