
ONESOURCE JOINT COMMITTEE

5 April 2019

Subject heading:

oneSource Improvement Plan

Report author and contact details:

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Financial summary:

Implementation of the Improvement Plan will largely be met from within existing resources in oneSource. However, it will require further discussions about the resourcing in key areas, as set out in the report.

SUMMARY

This report is presented to the Committee for approval of the Improvement Plan and Action Plan and delegate the agreement of any minor changes to wording to officers in consultation with lead members for each partner councils. The report notes that implementation of the Action Plan will take into account agreements on resourcing and the final service plans in the partner boroughs and, consequently, oneSource services.

RECOMMENDATIONS

For the reasons set out in the report, the Committee is recommended:

1. To consider and agree the oneSource Improvement Plan and Action Plan attached at Appendix 1 and 2
2. To delegate to the Interim Executive Director, oneSource to finalise the Improvement Plan and Action Plan following consultation with the Chief Executives of the partner Councils (or their nominees).
3. To note:

- a) Progress on the Action Plan will be reported to the Joint Committee and partner Councils.
- b) Services plans for each oneSource directorate are being completed to reflect the Improvement Plan, taking into account the partner Council corporate priorities, and including agreed performance and service standards.
- c) The partner Councils and the Interim Executive Director will agree the resources available to deliver the Improvement Plan, following the approach outlined in this report.

REPORT DETAIL

1. Background

- 1.1 The Improvement Plan and its attached Action Plan is presented for agreement following the discussions between the partner Councils in 2018/19 and, hopefully, reflects the views of the partners in identifying and addressing the areas for improvement.
- 1.2 Following May 2018 elections, a consensus emerged across the three partner authorities that oneSource should primarily deliver their corporate priorities and support council services rather than generate external business. Areas of improvement and re-prioritisation for oneSource emerged from this agreement. It was agreed in January that oneSource should prepare an improvement plan to be agreed by the oneSource Joint Committee with effect from 2019-20 noting that a number of the improvements are already underway.
- 1.3 The Improvement Plan will be embedded into service plans for each oneSource directorate. oneSource services have had service plans, service level agreements and performance indicators in place since 2014 and were substantially refreshed in 2017/18. Service plans and Improvement Plan priorities will be kept under review to reflect partner Council priorities.

2. Proposals

- 2.1 The Improvement Plan identifies 41 areas for improvement with three main themes for improvement aimed at reflecting the core issues raised by the partner councils:
 - Improved operational delivery
 - Improved strategic impact and presence
 - Communication, culture and branding.
- 2.2 **Improving operational delivery** is straightforward. All oneSource services will aim to improve the quality of their services to the partner Councils, and this will be measured by meaningful performance indicators and satisfaction with the services provided. All services will be required to demonstrate continuous improvement in how services are delivered.
- 2.3 **Improving strategic impact and presence** aims to improve the gaps identified by partner boroughs in oneSource's delivery of senior and strategic support to chief officers and members. It is also aimed at reducing the perceived "distance" or "separation" between oneSource services and the corporate management within each authority with key areas, as identified below, including organisational development and finance support.
- 2.4 **Communication, culture and branding** aims to deliver the change of identity of oneSource from its original mandate to "sell" shared services externally on a commercial basis, to primarily an in-house shared service delivering excellent services to the three councils, with

the ability to undertake and work for other councils where that brings in income – but does not undermine the in house focus. This will be welcomed by most staff, and focuses on the development of a positive identity for oneSource based on embedded support for the partner councils and innovation. This will be supported by an agreed strategy for internal and external communications of oneSource, which balances the embedding of oneSource within the partner councils with promoting success, innovation and pride amongst the oneSource services, together with an agreed approach to external work and marketing. The branding of oneSource will also be reviewed to reflect these changes and a separate report is before the Committee on this topic.

- 2.5 All three themes reflect the agreed shift of oneSource towards a dominant focus on excellent service delivery to the partner councils and away from commercial expansion. oneSource will continue to undertake external work where it is successfully doing so – most particularly its ethical enforcement service which works for 4 boroughs – and also where there is a market for its services, such as health and safety training. These areas bring in significant income to all three boroughs, reducing the net cost of oneSource. Further, oneSource services will continue to be open to delivering and proposing mutually beneficial sharing between partner Councils, e.g. in areas of common working like smarter working and accommodation reviews.
- 2.6 There are four services where specific areas of improvement were identified:
- ICT
 - Asset Management
 - Human Resources & Organisational Development
 - Finance
- 2.7 Some of the actions will cover more than one improvement theme or area, for example the proposed Finance restructure will aim to improve operational delivery and also strengthen strategic impact and presence with its focus on senior roles within the service.
- 2.8 All oneSource services will continue to exercise commercial discipline in how partner councils money is spent, such as gaining a full understanding of the costs of delivering services but with the overall aim of improving efficiency and value for money for the partner Councils.
- 2.9 Further, all oneSource services (through their service plans) will be required to demonstrate innovation and “added value” to the partner councils. This could be from:
- Sharing skills and experience gained across the three boroughs through undertaking similar work for different partners, such as the current parallel Smarter Working programmes;
 - Proposing and sharing mutually beneficial solutions for greater sharing of work to reduce duplication of effort and reducing costs; and / or
 - Potential for innovation and transformation in how services are delivered through the oneSource model.
- 2.10 There are areas of the Improvement Plan that are still draft in form, particularly timelines and agreement of performance measures. These are being developed alongside the iterations of the partner Council service plans and corporate projects, e.g. Smarter Ways of Working.
- 2.11 Sitting behind the Improvement Plan will be:
- Service Plans for each oneSource directorate and for oneSource overall

- Detailed implementation plans for projects and programmes identified in the plan.

2.12 Once agreed the Improvement Plan will be implemented through service and team plans and ultimately embedded into individual performance objectives.

2.13 Performance monitoring will be open and transparent with the primary forum being the commissioners in each authority and the oneSource Joint Committee.

Resources

2.14 Finally, it should be noted that, once agreed, it is likely to be necessary for discussion on resourcing and / or prioritisation of existing resources to take place. This is the most significant risk to delivery of the Improvement Plan. The proposed approach of oneSource services will be:

- To maximise the use of existing resources to align and support to the Improvement Plan priorities (including maximising the efficiency of services).
- To identify how existing core resources can be “flexed” to provide additional service delivery based on the economies of scale from having a shared service (but respecting the oneSource funding formula).
- To identify where additional or specialist resources are required for discussion and agreement. (This discussion may also include deprioritising work to free up existing resources)

2.15 The final Improvement Action Plan will reflect these discussions.

3. Consultation & Engagement

3.1 All oneSource directors have contributed to the Improvement Plan. The draft Plan was shared with the commissioning officers in each authority and it was taken for noting to Newham’s Corporate Management Team, where it was positively received.

Legal implications and risks:

There are no direct legal implications.

Financial Implications and risks:

The report addresses the issue of resourcing the Improvement Plan.

Resourcing is the main risk to the delivery of the Improvement Plan. oneSource already has savings targets based on the reduced need for its (generally support) services due to the contraction of partner Councils arising from their own savings plans. Savings plans have already been presented. Mitigation of these risks is largely through the negotiation of the final Improvement Plan with the partner boroughs, which would allow for prioritisation and variance of targets and timelines. Financial risks are planned to be mitigated by alternate savings and review of budgets to find efficiencies and, as a last resort, use of reserves set aside for innovation and invest to save programmes.

HR Implications and risks:

There are no direct HR implications. Once the Improvement Plan is agreed, a process of staff engagement in oneSource will commence to embed its new priorities and it is hoped that awareness and engagement can also take place with partner Council staff and members.

Improvement Plan targets will become objectives for directors and staff within oneSource via the service planning and appraisal process.

Appendices:

- 1. oneSource Improvement Plan (draft)**
- 2. oneSource Improvement Action Plan (draft)**

Background Papers:

None