

## 1.15.1 Member Services

	<b>OR Report Recommendations</b>	<b>Action</b>
1.	Continue to maintain effective planning, co-ordination and provision of a network of support to the democratic and committee administration service and its customers.	Agreed
2.	<p>Renew the Northgate (CoInS) system for a minimum one year period, while discussions are had with the supplier to discuss plans to:</p> <p>a. maintain support levels in the medium/long term (i.e. to August 2018);</p> <p>b. develop functionality; and</p> <p>c. Investigate participation in a CoInS user group on a regular basis.</p>	Agreed
3.	Subject to points 2a – 2c (above) being achievable, the CoInS contract be extended for a further 3 years (i.e. to August 2018).	Agreed
4.	Should points 2a – 2c not be achievable, that the Modern.Gov option be adopted as the preferred option with effect from August 2015, subject to sufficient funding being made available.	Agreed, subject to resources (although the anticipated date will be after August 2015 given slippage in consideration of the OR Report)
5.	As part of the functionality referred to in 2b, take steps to address the content, accessibility and presentation of the Council's democratic data, including - the integration of that system with the Council's constitution resulting in easy access for stakeholders and updating by Member Services Officers.	Agreed
6.	Continue to reaffirm the importance of transparency, so that customers, staff and stakeholders feel reassured of objectivity and transparency; addressing the significance of reliability in the process.	Agreed

7.	Reaffirm the significance of compliance with the Green Guide with the use of the local champions.	Agreed
8.	Review and overhaul the use of printed copy and the use of Kalamazoo-quality paper for minute books, with a view to placing greater credence and reliability upon electronic data-handling.	Agreed
9.	Consider implementing appropriate process-specific improvements identified within the Redesign Schedule attached at Appendix E. Implementation of appropriate changes (with the exception of the service software) can be done as part of the Member Services day to day roles , with support from a short term post of Practice Administrator.	Borough Solicitor to take forward as appropriate as per Comments column at Appendix 3A and subject to resources
10.	Providing Elected Members with IPADs to facilitate easy electronic access to papers and Members choosing electronic access only could potentially save over 613,000 printed sides of paper per annum. Further details are provided in Appendix E to this report.	Included in 9. above
11.	That the financial cost (in terms of both subscription and the opportunity cost of managing benchmarking information) of joining a benchmarking initiative (e.g. CIPFA), outweighs the benefit, due to the lack of critical mass in the Democratic Services area.	Agreed

### 1.15.2 Legal Services

	<b>OR Report Recommendations</b>	<b>Action</b>
1.	Approve and adopt the new client instruction process, and associated forms, developed during the redesign stage. Introduce a formalised 'triage' process for non-routine matters where instructions are channelled to the Borough Solicitor, who can scope the Instruction and allocate a priority and timescale for completion of the work.	Agreed
2.	As part of this formalised process, implement an 'Urgent Stream'. This approach will provide the level of flexibility required of a dynamic Legal Service, whilst maintaining a degree of control over priorities. This will require approval from Heads of Service to ensure that not all cases are classified as 'urgent'. Legal Services Triage would also be required to signify agreement before a case is treated as urgent and fast-tracked.	Agreed

3.	Optimise the use of functionality within the IKEN system by clearly understanding what functionality could affordably be utilised, or developed, to address the key issues identified from within the team. Create the short term resource of Practice Administrator to explore and develop the workflow functionality within IKEN to automatically provide regular feedback to customers – even if that is only a statement of the latest position. Organise further training for professional and support staff to enable use of the Iken system to be maximised.	Agreed, subject to resources
4.	Investigate via the short term post of Practice Administrator the opportunity for greater quality management information from within the system. Improved IKEN functionality will allow more informed decision making and better resource/workload management.	Agreed, subject to resources
5.	Addressing the output of appropriate MIS from IKEN would assist in providing management and support of the team members and would allow for the improved reprioritisation / reallocation of matters following initial allocation.	Agreed, subject to resources
6.	Clearly determine the standard to which cases should be worked (to avoid small gains against increased effort). Undertake some degree of service ‘promotion’ on the back of this review to help staff understand what the Legal Service can ‘do for them’. The form of this promotion will need careful thought, with a potential requirement for training; newsletters and a formal presentation on the outcomes of this organisational review. Introduce an annual meeting with Heads of Service when preparing service action plans each year to factor in requirements for Legal Services and identify resources (internal or external).	Annual Report and Annual quality of service/promotional meeting with each Head of Service and Cabinet
7.	Through the short term post of Practice Administrator review solutions for document storage/retention, given the restrictions in storage space.	Agreed, subject to resources
8.	Reaffirm the significance of compliance with the Green Guide, through staff training and more proactive use of local champions (for example through awareness sessions).	Agreed
9.	Review via the short term post of Practice Administrator the use of printed copy with a view to placing greater credence and reliability upon electronic data-handling where practicable. Explore the use of (encrypted) handheld devices for Court to enable remote working whilst waiting for case(s) to be called.	Agreed, subject to resources for Practice Administrator and handheld devices

10.	Implement the process-specific improvements identified within the Redesign Schedule attached at Appendix F with the assistance of a short term post of Practice Administrator and a two year fixed term post of Assistant Solicitor or Trainee Solicitor.	Borough Solicitor to take forward as appropriate as per Comments column at Appendix 3B, subject to resources and to the appointment of a Practice Administrator (2 years) and approval of the budget bid for an Assistant Solicitor.
11.	Whilst proactive work is essential, appropriate use of Legal Services should be encouraged, for example not using Legal Services for simple operational matters. This can be addressed as part of the client instruction process and Triage approach as detailed in Recommendations 1 and 2 (above).	Agreed
12.	That the financial cost (in terms of both subscription and the opportunity cost of managing benchmarking information) of joining a benchmarking initiative (e.g. CIPFA), outweighs the benefit, due to the lack of critical mass in the Legal Services area.	Agreed
13.	Given that the Council's Legal Service is Lean; the level of service user satisfaction; the high utilisation of staff and the service improvement recommendations herein, there appears to be a clear 'best fit' for the Council – to retain an efficient, effective and Lean in-house Legal services team. This can be added to through external support where specialist, sensitive or infrequently required services are needed, or to add to internal capacity due to workload peaks.	Agreed