



Service Plan

2009/10

Environment Finance and Performance

KJ/BC/1900509

1. SERVICE OVERVIEW

The Finance and Performance Department employs approximately 36 permanent members of staff, together with a significant number of casual staff who assist with ceremonies (Registrars) and the maintenance of the cemeteries. It is primarily responsible for:

- Provision of a financial guidance, budget monitoring, budget setting and closing of the accounts for the Directorate, collection of £31 M income (26,000 debtor invoices) and the processing of over 22,500 creditor invoices per annum.
- The maintenance of six cemeteries and the provision of facilities for over 350 burials per annum.
- The provision of statutory Registrar Services for births, deaths and marriages as well as citizenship services, naming ceremonies, renewal of vows and with effect from summer 2008 a nationality checking service for individuals seeking British Citizenship.
- Development and monitoring of performance processes and indicators across the directorate, including the collation of information for internal and external reporting and the quality of the data used to produce them.
- The effective and efficient recording, and the sympathetic management and resolution of complaints for all services within the Directorate and the analysis and preparation of reports on complaints and service improvement opportunities.
- Supporting front-line services who have achieved and those who are seeking external quality accreditations (e.g. ISO9001:2000, TSA, IIP and Customer Service Excellence (CSE), through the identification, analysis and improvement of processes, and the development of documented business management systems.

2. VISION

The finance unit to provide robust financial data in a timely manner which is

- actively used by budget holders ;
- delivers services within budget;
- enables the preparation of action plans to bring any overspends back within budget.

Basic processes and procedures are streamlined to maximise available time for detailed reporting on specific issues e.g. overtime, temporary staff etc.

Where financial data suggests that they may be a shortfall in income for example, budget holders are able to take action to either increase income or reduce expenditure within the reduced resources available.

The performance unit envisage:

- Agreed local performance indicators in each service unit which are relevant and support their key priorities for the year;
- Central repository for performance information which can be viewed by all;
- Robust performance data for each indicator with a full audit trail
- Monthly action plans being provided to demonstrate that the information is being used to deliver improved performance
- Timely provision of
 - Corporate quarterly reports
 - Monthly information for Members with graphs, where appropriate

3. KEY RISKS

- Income targets are not achieved which could lead to the inability of the Directorate to remain within its net controllable budgets
- The Environment Directorate is particularly vulnerable to the down turn in the economic climate as many of its income streams are demand led
- Planning applications
- Building Control applications
- Car Parking
- Commercial Waste
- Wedding Ceremonies
- Sale of recyclable materials

The failure of the finance department to monitor all income streams closely may result in expenditure not being adjusted promptly to meet the available resources.

The failure to ensure that our data quality is robust and that we are monitoring activity in these areas may lead to inappropriate decisions being made. An incorrect decision may result in an over spend or a failure to deliver our priorities.

4. RESOURCES

The majority of expenditure within Finance and Performance is related to staff salaries. We rely on casual staff to provide additional support at peak periods e.g. cemeteries ground staff to maintain the grounds during the grass cutting season, and sessional registrars to conduct weddings and civil partnership ceremonies.

Capital financing will be required to fund the replacement of the fencing around the cemeteries. It is intended that the programme will be phased over a three year period. Construction Services are to conduct a survey of the cemeteries and advise on the likely cost of the work. At this stage we estimate that we may need c £25K. A capital bid will be prepared when more information is available. Revenues resources are as follows:

Employees	1,514,400
Premises	180,000
Supplies & Services	123,100
Transport	73,000
Recharges	778,600
TOTAL EXPENDITURE	2,669,100

Fees and Charges	-689,400
Grant	-600
Rent	-3,400
Misc	-5,300
TOTAL INCOME	-698,700

5. EFFICIENCY

During the next financial year we will be seeking to review our work plans, which are now almost complete. The task is to identify those tasks that appear to be taking significant staff resources and to investigate possible revision of procedures and or policies. Particular concerns are the handling of changes to waste contracts, debt monitoring and the processing of invoices.

The processing of accounts payable is currently handled by a number of different sections across the Directorate. This is an area I need to review to see whether the work could be consolidated and handled more efficiently within the finance directorate.

Ambitious targets have been set within the Directorate to reduce staffing costs through the better management of overtime and use of temporary staff. It will be our responsibility to monitor our progress in this area and to recommend action to Directors.

As part of Richmond Works Finance and Performance will be moving to the second floor and will be required to operate a clear desk policy, manage more closely our storage capability and use of desks.

Action plan

Priority 1: Improve Customer Service/Experience

Corporate / Community Priority	Outcome	Action / Programme	End date and milestone	Measure description	Target 2009/2010	Resources	Job Title	Risk Register Ref.
Leading and engaging the community Services that are high performing, provide value for money and accessible	Improved customer service	Submit CSE application Inspection Date	28 February 2009 20 May 2009 – outcome should be confirmed during June 2009	Award of CSE	Complete	Existing resources	Head of Customer Services and performance	Env Fin & Per
	Improved customer service satisfaction	Satisfaction survey forms provided to all users of Registrar/Cemeteries services and forms provided at the Cemetery Office for visitors to the sites	Monthly reporting towards annual target 31 March 2009	Proportion of Registrar / Cemeteries customers who are satisfied or very satisfied with the services provided	95%	Existing resources	Head of Customer Services and performance	Env Fin & Per

Priority 2: Introduction of Online Genealogy Research Tool

Corporate / Community Priority	Outcome	Action / Programme	End date and milestone	Measure description	Target 2009/2010	Resources	Job Title	Risk Register Ref.
Services that are high performing, provide value for money and accessible	Increased accessibility for customers and further income generation	IT to install software and link to payment software Promotion of service on website	In place and working	Research tool successfully installed and working Amount of income achieved from genealogy research	Annual income target established	Within existing resources	Head of Cemetery Service	Finance & Perf.
	Improved customer service	Direction of telephone/email contacts to the website link to enable self-service. Can be accessed 24/7 as opposed to office hours.		Number of people using the online service Satisfaction of users – accessibility by survey of user demographics	100 users (per annum) Majority of users satisfied or very satisfied	Within existing resources	Head of Cemetery Service	Finance & Perf.

Priority 3: Improve Community Safety at Cemeteries

Corporate / Community Priority	Outcome	Action / Programme	End date and milestone	Measure description	Target 2009/2010	Resources	Job Title	Risk Register Ref.
Services that are high performing, provide value for money and accessible Safest London Borough	Improve the security and appearance of the cemeteries to reduce the incidents of vandalism and improve customer experience	Replacement of fencing at all the cemeteries over three year period	All cemeteries fencing replaced by 2012	Replacement of fencing by cemetery	Richmond and Teddington	Capital resources of £25K est	Head of Cemetery Service	Finance & Perf.
		Cleaning and making safe of memorials	All notable persons' memorials cleaned	Number of memorials cleaned	20 memorials cleaned	Within existing staffing resources.		
		Adopt a Grave Scheme	Increase number year on year	Number of Adoptions	20 adoptions	Within existing resources		
	Increased Security			Number of reported incidents of graffiti, stolen plants, damage to cemetery grounds	Reduce number of incidents (base 13)		Head of Cemetery Service	Finance & Perf.

Priority 4: To Maximise Income for the Council and to Better Manage Available Resources

Corporate / Community Priority	Outcome	Action / Programme	End date and milestone	Measure description	Target 2009/2010	Resources	Job Title	Risk Register Ref.
Services that are high performing, provide value for money and accessible	Improved use of resources	Reduce amount of outstanding debt which is more than 6 months old	31 st March 2010	Amount of debt shown as outstanding at the end of each month	<£50,000	Existing resources	Head of Finance and Performance	Finance & Perf.
		Ensure full income reconciliations are taking place to ensure we are recovering all monies due						
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parking • Planning • Building Control • Trade Waste • Property 	30 June onwards 30 April onwards 30 April onwards 30 April onwards 30 April onwards	Evidence of monthly reconciliations as part of budget monitoring process	Reconciliations are standard			
Provide monthly reports to enable managers to reduce the costs of								
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • overtime paid to temporary and permanent staff • temporary staff by ensuring that overall vacancy rate is achieved 	Monthly (perm staff) Weekly (temp)	Evidence of production of report and list of agreed actions to reduce overtime incurred by all temporary and permanent staff	Amount spent on overtime reduced by 25% (currently 40K per month) Vacancy rate achieved			
			Monthly		Still to be			

Corporate / Community Priority	Outcome	Action / Programme	End date and milestone	Measure description	Target 2009/2010	Resource s	Job Title	Risk Register Ref.
		Efficiency tracking schedule to be updated regularly to monitor efficiency gains	Monthly updates	FTE equivalent remains within budget Efficiency targets on track	agreed			

Priority 5: To Improve Data Quality and Performance Management within the Directorate

Corporate / Community Priority	Outcome	Action / Programme	End date and milestone	Measure description	Target 2009/2010	Resources	Job Title	Risk Register Ref.
Services that are high performing, provide value for money and accessible	Improve data quality and performance management within the directorate	Carry out DQ audits for all Environment NIs where LBRuT are responsible for the data with full reference to definitions and audit commission guidance	31 March 2010	Number of completed DQ audits	12	Existing resources	Head of Customer Services and Perf.	Finance & Perf.
		Set standards and create NI audit trails to be used during DQ audits	30 Sept 2009	Documented procedures for collection of audit trails	12	Existing resources	Head of Customer Services and Perf.	Finance & Perf.
		Create Performance Management intranet area for Environment to improve accessibility for managers	30 June 2009 – Creation of site	Intranet area showing links to performance reports, definitions, service plans etc Evidence of SH using the area	Site to have key links Monthly updates on intranet	Existing resources	Head of Customer Services and Perf.	Finance & Perf.
		Improve quarterly reporting	As per due dates provided by Corp Performance Team	Quarterly reports produced with consistent and accurate performance information	Reports produced to corporate deadlines	Existing resources	Head of Customer Services and Perf	Finance & Perf.

For further information please contact:

Diane Makepeace

Head of Finance and Performance

Diane.Makepeace@richmond.gov.uk

Tel: 0208 891 7878