

**To be completed for Procurement Strategy / contract award  
where total spend is between £50,000 and £300,000**

DECISION MAKER: Cabinet Member for Finance and Commercial Services – Cllr  
Schmid

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**London Borough of Hammersmith & Fulham**

**Subject:** Resident Experience and Access Programme – interim staffing  
resource funding

**Report of:** Nicola Ellis – Assistant Director for Resident Services

**Responsible Director:** Sharon Lea - Strategic Director for Environment

**RECOMMENDATIONS**

1. That the Cabinet Member for Finance agrees to commit up to £57,000 in funding from one-off corporate reserves for interim staffing resource to support the Resident Experience and Access Programme (REAP) for the period from August/September to November/December 2020.

**REASON FOR DECISIONS**

2. Full delivery of the Resident Experience and Access Programme is expected to be considered by Cabinet in October 2020, ready for implementation in November 2020. It is recommended that the Council commits to funding the required interim programme resource for the following reasons:
  - The detailed business case and delivery plan was originally due to be considered by Cabinet in April 2020. However, this has been delayed due to the impact of the COVID-19 emergency. Service response to the emergency has identified opportunities for the implementation of 'quick wins' through embedding and developing some of the service changes that have already been made as a result in changes in ways of working. Consequently, the identified opportunities are to be reviewed, ensuring that the maximum benefits are being realised as quickly as possible. To further postpone work towards delivery of the programme would lead to the loss of opportunities and delay service redesign and delivery of savings;
  - The detailed business case includes the requirement for a dedicated programme team with the required knowledge and experience to support the implementation and delivery of the programme. The recommended posts (one programme delivery and support manager, one programme support officer and one system analyst) are part of that team. The programme manager will oversee delivery of the whole programme. The systems analyst will embed and develop the changes

already made in response to COVID-19, including the development and delivery of new digital processes and updated web content in this phase;

- It is recommended that these roles are recruited to now to ensure that delivery work can commence right away, in readiness for consideration of the full programme by Cabinet in October 2020. These roles are the minimum requirement to enable both coordination and support for the detailed design as well as development, enabling the programme to move straight into the delivery phase for tranche 1A services as soon as approved by Cabinet.

## **PROPOSALS AND ANALYSIS OF OPTIONS**

3. Detailed planning work to set out a clear business case and delivery plan for the transformation of residents' services across the Council took place during 2019. An associated governance and delivery structure for a Resident Experience and Access Programme (REAP) was established in June 2019 to assure the quality and viability of this plan and oversee successful delivery. The programme is being led by the Environment Department with a joint management arrangement with Finance and the full involvement of all service Departments. At every stage, co-production will be used to make sure that the new arrangements for residents' access make it easier for all residents to interact with the council and to get help and support.
4. There are three main programme deliverables:
  - the biggest programme of digital development for front line service delivery the Council has ever embarked on
  - the bringing together and improvement of telephone and face to face customer services
  - the development of associated policies and our operating model for how our services will work together more closely to more effectively and efficiently meet needs in the future
5. The detailed business case and full delivery plan were due to be presented to Cabinet in April 2020. However, this has been delayed due to the impact of the COVID-19 emergency. As a result of this emergency, significant changes have been made to the way the Council delivers services and the way in which our residents interact with us. Some of these changes have been positive and have presented opportunities to move towards the vision of the REAP. These opportunities also offer the potential to deliver more benefits more quickly - this is welcomed in view of the current financial challenges facing the Council. Consequently, SLT and the REAP Programme Board have commenced a review of the programme to ensure that the report to Cabinet reflects the current climate.
6. The programme review to date has identified the potential of a 'Phase 0 – Quick Win' phase where the impact of service changes already made as a result of changes to ways of working and customer behaviour in response to COVID 19, are analysed are analysed (benefits and delivery quantified) and embedded. External consultancy is required to support this, along with the recommended programme resource to drive and coordinate this work.

7. The breakdown of funding requested is shown below (relating to the 4 month period August-November 2020):

Post	Grade	Cost
REAP Programme Delivery and Support Manager	PO9	£25,000
REAP Programme Support Officer*	PO2	£16,000
System Analyst	PO2	£16,000
<b>Total Resource Funding Required August-Nov 2020</b>		<b>£57,000</b>

\*Note the Programme Support Officer is to be advertised as a career graded post and there is potential that this will be recruited to at a lower grade and deliver a development opportunity or apprenticeship. This amount is the maximum that would be required for a candidate with all relevant skills and experience

8. Other options have been considered in arriving at this recommendation:

**Option 1 - To delay further work, pending Cabinet approval of the full programme**

This would lead to delays in the delivery of the benefits already identified in the programme. Opportunities to gain from service changes already made as a result of COVID-19 would be missed. These opportunities include the culture change across the Council and the change in behaviour of our residents, which are key to successful delivery of a transformation programme as significant as this.

**Option 2 - To provide this support in-house**

These vacancies will be open to internal applicants and potentially secondments will be considered, but specific technical skills are required in some instances. The Programme Manager role is key to the success of this significant programme and so it is recommended that this is advertised externally to ensure recruitment of the right candidate and to maximise the pool of potential applicants. This will need to be a dedicated resource full time and so if an internal applicant is recruited there is likelihood that their role will need to be backfilled and so a transfer of funding would not be appropriate. Some of the system development work will be carried out within the affected services, particularly by those officers who have previously worked on development of IT forms as part of the previous self-service project (relating to the Firmstep system). However, a dedicated resource is required to ensure pace of delivery.

**FINANCIAL IMPACT**

9. The recommended programme resources are expected to cost £57,000 for the four month period August/September-November/December 2020. Although these opportunities will be open to existing Council employees, if an internal candidate is appointed it is expected that their substantive role will need to be backfilled and so there will be no corresponding transfer of budget from their existing role. As such, it is recommended that this £57,000 is funded from one-off council reserves in 2020/21. Council reserves are limited, meaning any investment in this programme would mean less resource available to support other corporate priorities. Any funding requirement beyond November 2020 will need to be considered as part of the full

business case to be reported to Cabinet in October 2020. The current detailed plan for the wider Resident Access and Experience Programme has identified net ongoing annual savings opportunities in the region of £3.5m from year three. The recommended programme resource will help to ensure delivery of the programme and maximise the ongoing financial benefits and is therefore considered good value for money.

10. Implications completed by: Kellie Gooch – Head of finance, the environment. Telephone 0208 753 2203.
11. Implications verified by: Emily Hill – Director of Finance. Telephone 0208 753 3145.

### **LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

12. There are no legal implications for this report.
13. Implications completed by: Janette Mullins, Chief Solicitor Litigation Telephone 020 8753

### **RISK IMPLICATIONS**

14. Programme resources will improve the chances of a successful delivery of the Resident Experience and Access programme. Often programmes which do not have appropriate and experienced resources deliver below expectations and benefits may be diminished. The proposals seek to improve opportunity and benefits realisation in a strategically important change in accordance with our Priority of Ruthlessly Financially Efficient. The HM Government funding to Councils in response to the Covid-19 outbreak means that reserves are under significant pressure, that risk has been referenced in the financial impact however the relatively small investment may result in financial benefits of £3.5m.
15. Implications completed by: Michael Sloniowski, Risk Manager, telephone 020 8753 2587

### **EQUALITY**

16. There are no anticipated negative implications for groups with protected characteristics, under the Equality Act 2010, by the approval of the funding request outlined in this report.
17. Implications completed by: Fawad Bhatti, Policy & Strategy Officer, tel. 07500 103617.

### **DIGITAL SERVICES IMPLICATIONS**

18. Digital Services has noted its involvement in, and support for, the Resident Experience and Access Programme (REAP) in the CMD requesting one-off Consultancy Funding to enable the bringing forward of aspects of the programme to

ensure that quick wins identified as a result of working through the Covid-19 lockdown period are capitalised upon and not lost.

19. Given the breadth and significance of this Programme to H&F, ensuring that a dedicated Programme team is in place from the outset is essential to the success of the overall REAP. This has been demonstrated by the success of programmes like Tech-tonic which were only able to deliver ambitious targets within demanding timescales by being adequately resourced.
20. Implications verified/completed by: Tina Akpogheneta, Interim Head of strategy and Strategic relationship manager, IT Services, tel 0208 753 5748.