

BRIEFING PAPER FOR CORPORATE MANAGEMENT TEAM

TITLE	AUTHOR	ITEM NO	CORPORATE MANAGEMENT TEAM DATE
Team Planning Peer Review 2014/15	Gulam Hussain, SPP Officer, LPG	TBC	□
Date item reported to DMT: Report agreed by PRG 14/10/14			

1. INTRODUCTION/SUMMARY

- 1.1 To ensure team planning is robust, corporate guidance is produced and reviewed on an annual basis. The Team Planning Peer Review, which focuses on the team planning process, has historically been the main source of evidence to assess the quality of team planning and inform the refresh of guidance, training and support given to managers.
- 1.2 As in previous years, the team planning review used peer reviewers meeting the relevant team managers in addition to undertaking a small number of follow up 'desktop' reviews for plans with particularly low scores from the previous year. Complementary to this, for the first time, ten additional plans from across the council were requested to confirm plans were in place across the council.
- 1.3 This report provides CMT with the results of the 2014/15 Team Planning Review including details of the process, findings and recommendations. Overall, this year's review found team planning in 2014/15 to have improved compared to the previous year – the average score being 15% higher than in 2013/14.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

CMT is asked to:

- 2.1 Note the findings of the team plan peer review process;
- 2.2 Agree that the corporate guidance, template and training is refreshed to address areas identified for improvement, including value for money and human resources;

- 2.3 Agree that strong internal communications be undertaken on the importance of team planning, and the support resources available (see paragraph 5.4 for details).

3. REVIEW PROCESS

- 3.1 The Team Planning Review this year drew upon Service Managers from across the Council, who acted as Peer Reviewers. These were supported by a set of Support Reviewers from Strategy Policy & Performance teams.
- 3.2 The team planning review aims to assess the quality of the process of the planning that resulted in the plan and associated documentation. The assessment of team planning is based on a score between zero and three for each of the 22 criteria which underpin the key principles of team planning (set out in Appendix C).
- 3.3 Although 10 teams were provisionally agreed for review by PRG, 3 of the originally identified teams were changed following consultation with the respective directorates. This was due to the identified teams being incorporated in wider service plans which have recently been subject to the review exercise. A list of teams provisionally agreed by PRG and subsequently reviewed is attached as Appendix A. All directorates were represented in this year's review.
- 3.4 The review consisted of a self-assessment completed by the team manager, followed by a meeting of up to two hours between the two reviewers and the relevant team manager.
- 3.5 Feedback regarding assessment scores, areas of strength as well as areas requiring improvement was provided directly to all managers involved during the review meeting. All managers were offered the opportunity to provide supplementary documents to ensure that all aspects of their business planning were accurately scored, not just the team plan itself; the focus of the review is the team planning process rather than the team plan. Issues requiring action corporately will be addressed through the revision of corporate team planning guidance and training.
- 3.6 In addition to the main peer review process, a desktop follow-up review of teams from last year's review graded "requires support" – effectively below satisfactory – was conducted. Again, feedback was provided directly to the relevant managers.
- 3.7 Last year three teams subject to the review were deemed to have not met the required standard. These teams (Community Safety, HR & Workforce Development, and Longer Term Support).

3.8 In addition to these teams, the Community Learning Disabilities Service in ESCW was prioritised for a full review due to the absence of a team plan during last year’s exercise.

4. REVIEW FINDINGS

Existence of team plans – Findings

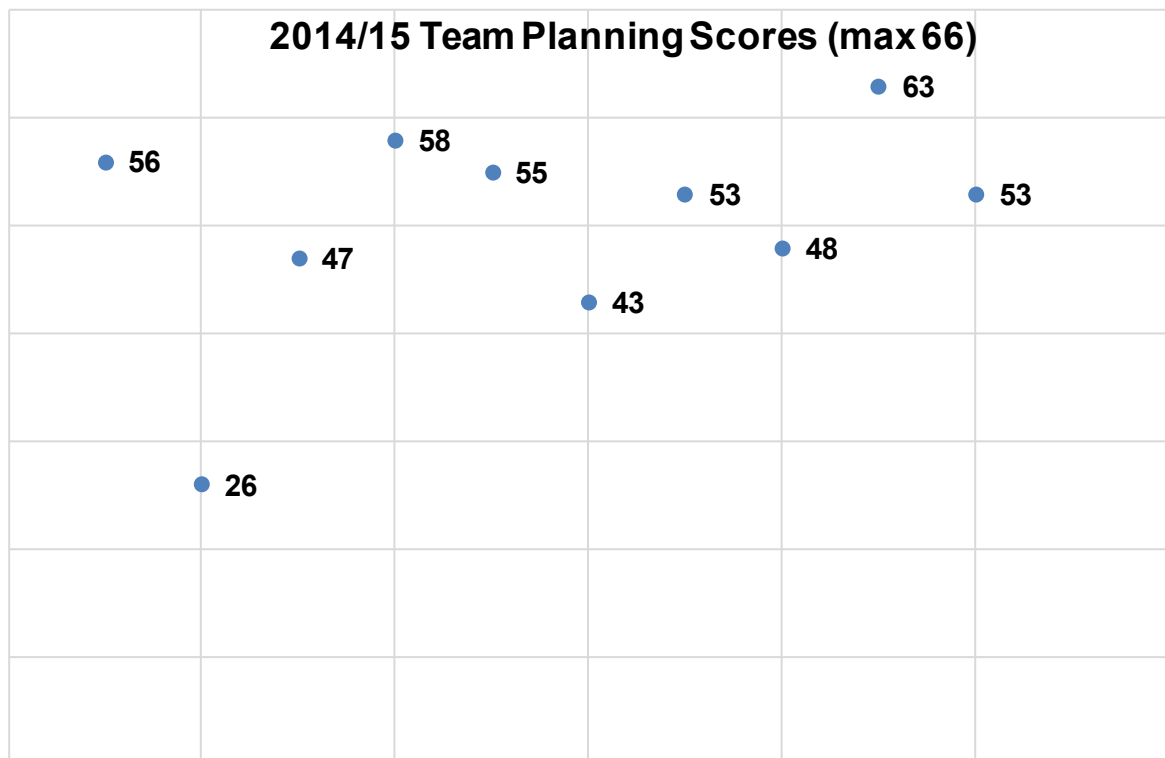
4.1 One of the most basic aims of the team planning review is to identify whether or not team plans exist. Drawing on previous experience, the review exercise requested ten plans from across the council in addition to those being peer reviewed to confirm plans do exist. A full list of requested plans can be found in Appendix B.

4.2 Requested plans were assessed to ensure they existed and were completed. The quality of the planning or the planning process was not subject to assessment in this instance.

4.3 All ten plans requested were found to have met the basic requirement of existing in a completed format.

Quality of team planning – Peer Review Findings

4.4 The overall distribution of team planning scores is detailed below.



4.5 The small numbers reviewed (and peer nature of the process) may mean that these scores are not entirely representative of the wider

Council picture. Team planning ratings as well as the proportion of teams in each category are detailed below:

		Number of teams	% of teams
Requires support before next team planning cycle	A score less than 34	1	10%
Satisfactory	A score of 34 – 53	7	70%
Good - Excellent	A score of 54 or greater (and no scores <2)	2	20%
Total		10	100%

- 4.6 For many teams although their team planning was in places excellent, other areas contained key deficiencies. A breakdown of all scores by Directorate, and the Council average, is included at Appendix D.

Performance in Specific Areas

- 4.7 The highest scores, on average, and the largest number of teams scoring 3 (criteria fully met) were for the following questions:

Area	Question	Average	Number of teams achieving 3 (out of 10)
Monitoring Progress	Has DMT/SMT seen the plan?	2.5	8
Objectives	Do plan objectives relate to Community Plan themes?	2.6	7
Objectives	Is the Team's role/function clear (to the lay reader)?	2.6	7
Risk Management	Have you identified the most significant risks to achievement of your team plan objectives, using the corporate risk framework?	2.6	7
Risk Management	Are these risks recorded on a risk register?	2.5	7
Development	Were the team's objectives challenged to ensure they are still appropriate?	2.7	7
User Focus	Does the plan provide details of service standards?	2.6	6
Objectives	Do objectives relate to priorities in the Strategic Plan/other key strategies?	2.5	6
Development	Were team members involved in developing the plan?	2.3	5

Planning to Deliver	Do activities have resource allocations and lead/responsible officers?	2.5	5
Planning to Deliver	Do activities have timescales and milestones?	2.4	5
Target Setting	Are there performance measures and targets?	2.5	5

4.8 The lowest scores, on average, and the largest number of teams scoring zero (criteria not met) were for the following questions:

Area	Question	Average	Number of teams achieving 0 (out of 10)
Development	Were team members involved in developing the plan?	2.3	1
Monitoring Progress	Was the plan monitored at six months?	2.0	2
Human Resources	Is there a plan for the team's training and development needs?	2.1	1
Human Resources	Has workforce planning been incorporated in the plan?	2.0	1
Value for Money	Does the plan demonstrate how value for money will be provided?	1.7	1
Value for Money	Has the team set out what it will need to reduce, stop or do differently to work within current and future budgets?	1.5	3

4.9 Last year there was a focus on equalities and diversity and measuring performance with revised guidance and an update corporate team planning template. The input appears to have had a positive impact. Alignment of directorate templates with the corporate template may assist in further improvement.

4.10 Despite targeted support in 2012/13 and some success in improving performance in 2013/14, the areas of value for money and human resources require continued support, based on the review's findings.

4.11 Overall the exercise showed a noticeable improvement in team planning this year. The average score in 2014/15 was 15% higher than in the 2013/14.

4.12 Of the 22 areas of assessment, the 2013/14 exercise identified plans were weak (achieving a score of 0 or 1) across ten categories with an average score of 1.49. The 2014/15 exercise shows the number of areas of weakness to have decreased to seven and with the average increasing to 2.01.

Follow-up (Desktop) Reviews – Findings

- 4.13 In addition, four plans were identified for follow up reviews where teams scored below 34 in the 2013/14 review exercise. The teams identified for review are based in CLC, ESCW and Resources.
- 4.14 Of the three teams reviewed, two were judged to have improved to Satisfactory, whilst the third showed limited improvement. It is proposed that this service also be identified for dedicated support and further review in 2015/16.

5. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

- 5.1 Whilst acknowledging the limitations of a review which has focused on a small sample of the council's teams, the team planning review has been a useful exercise.
- 5.2 The review has found that, in general, team plans are in place and that team planning has improved over the last year. Nevertheless, it has also demonstrated that there is a disparity in terms of the quality of the planning process between different teams.
- 5.3 There appears to be a number of common areas for improvement which can be addressed corporately through revised guidance and focused team planning training including on:
- Human Resources
 - Value for Money
- 5.4 More generally, an approach which has been found to be effective in improving the quality of team planning includes:
- Regular monitoring of Team Plans at SMTs / DMTs
 - SPP support to team planning including a quality assurance role
 - Use of the corporate template or a template based on the latest version
- The importance of DMTs / SMTs ensuring that team planning is taking place effectively is important. In addition to this, strong internal communications are proposed to remind managers of the importance of team planning and the available support resources, including training.
- 5.5 Communications work is already underway on the importance of adhering to the Council's performance management framework including team planning. Planned communications activities include: articles in Tower Hamlets Now, Managers' Briefings, promotion via New Manager's Induction training and team planning-specific training. To ensure full effectiveness, this work needs to be supported by Corporate Director/ DMT briefings, directorate newsletters and other directorate-specific communications.

- 5.6 It is proposed that the team planning peer review process continues to run in the summer to ensure that any areas for improvement can be addressed within timely corporate and directorate team planning guidance. It is also recommended that directorates provide a list of all completed and quality-assured plans to PRG every July, from which a long-list of team plans would be requested, addressing the initial basic aim of the review to assure that team plans exist.

APPENDIX A: LIST OF TEAMS REVIEWED

SERVICE/TEAM	DIRECTORATE	MANAGER
Attendance and Welfare	ESCW	David Hough
Community Learning Disability	ESCW	Sandra Howard
School Governance & Information	ESCW	Hania Franek
Planning & Building Control	D&R	Owen Whalley
Economic Development & Olympic Legacy	D&R	Andy Scott
DAAT/DIP	CLC	Rachael Sadegh
Consumer & Business Regulation	CLC	Dave Tolley
Committee Services	LPG	Matthew Mannion
Procurements	RES	Zamil Ahmed
Corporate Finance	RES	Barry Scarr

The following three team plans were originally identified for review by PRG but subsequently replaced with alternative teams from within the same directorate. This was due to plans being part of a wider service plan which had already been subject to review during the previous two exercise cycles. (see para 3.4)

SERVICE/TEAM	DIRECTORATE
Waste Strategy, Policy and Enforcement	CLC
Transport Contracts and Projects	CLC
Finance & HR Development Programme	RES

APPENDIX B: LIST OF TEAMS INCORPORATED IN WIDER SAMPLE

SERVICE/TEAM	DIRECTORATE	MANAGER/SERVICE HEAD
Oral Health Team	ESCW	Desmond Wright
Occupational Therapy	ESCW	Alex Hadayah
Pupil Admissions and Exclusions	ESCW	Terry Bryan
Programmes, Performance & Accountability	D&R	Dave Clark
Energy	D&R	Abdul J Khan
Environmental Health and Environment Protection	CLC	Andrew Weaver
Sports & Physical Activities	CLC	Lisa Pottinger
Complaints & Information Governance	LPG	Ruth Dowden
Registrars	LPG	Catherine Sutton
Benefits Services	RES	Steve Hill

APPENDIX C: TEAM PLANNING ASSESSMENT CHECKLIST

	Scoring			
(1) Development	0	1	2	3
1 Were the team's objectives challenged to ensure they are still appropriate?				
2 Were team members involved in developing the plan?				
(2) User Focus	0	1	2	3
3 Does the plan reflect an understanding of who uses the service?				
4 Does the plan provide details of service standards?				
5 Does the plan detail how equality and diversity will be supported?				
6 Is there evidence that equality monitoring / Equality Assessment findings have informed planning?				
(3) Objectives	0	1	2	3
7 Do plan objectives relate to Community Plan themes?				
8 Do priorities relate to the Strategic Plan/other key strategies?				
9 Is the Team's role/function clear (to a new member of the team)?				
(4) Planning to Deliver	0	1	2	3
10 Do activities have resource allocations and responsible officers?				
11 Do activities have timescales and milestones?				
(5) Monitoring Progress	0	1	2	3
12 Was the plan monitored at six months?				
13 Has DMT/SMT seen the plan?				
(6) Target Setting	0	1	2	3
14 Are there performance measures and targets?				
15 Are targets measurable and is baseline data provided?				
16 Is there a mix of targets - output and outcome?				
(7) Risk Management	0	1	2	3
17 Have you identified the most significant risks to the achievement of your team plan objectives, using the corporate risk framework?				
18 Are these risks recorded on a risk register?				
(8) Human Resources	0	1	2	3
19 Is there a plan for the team's training and development needs?				
20 Has workforce planning been incorporated in the plan?				
(9) Value for Money	0	1	2	3
21 Does the plan demonstrate how value for money will be provided?				
22 Has the team set out what it will need to reduce, stop or do differently to work within current and future budgets?				

APPENDIX D: DIRECTORATE SCORES

NB these scores are based on one or two teams per directorate – and so do not necessarily reflect team planning more broadly within the directorate

DIRECTORATE AVERAGES	LPG	CLC	D&R	ESCW	RES	Council Ave
(1) Development						
Were the team's objectives challenged to ensure they are still appropriate?	2.0	3.0	3.0	2.3	3.0	2.7
Were team members involved in developing the plan?	2.0	3.0	2.5	1.3	3.0	2.3
(2) User Focus						
Does the plan reflect an understanding of who uses the service?	2.0	3.0	2.5	2.3	2.0	2.4
Does the plan provide details of service standards?	3.0	2.5	2.0	2.7	3.0	2.4
Does the plan detail how equality and diversity will be supported?	2.0	2.0	1.5	1.7	2.0	1.9
Is there evidence that equality monitoring / Equality Assessment findings have informed planning?	1.0	2.0	1.5	2.0	2.0	1.9
(3) Objectives						
Do plan objectives relate to Community Plan themes?	3.0	3.0	3.0	2.0	2.0	2.6
Do objectives relate to priorities in the Strategic Plan/other key strategies?	3.0	3.0	3.0	1.7	2.0	2.5
Is the Team's role/function clear (to the lay reader)?	3.0	2.5	2.5	2.3	3.0	2.6
(4) Planning to Deliver						
Do activities have resource allocations and lead/responsible officers?	2.0	2.5	2.5	2.7	2.0	2.5
Do activities have timescales and milestones?	2.0	2.0	2.5	2.3	3.0	2.4
(5) Monitoring Progress						
Was the plan monitored at six months?	2.0	0.5	3.0	1.7	3.0	2.0
Has DMT/SMT seen the plan?	1.0	3.0	3.0	2.0	3.0	2.5
(6) Target Setting						
Are there performance measures and targets?	2.0	2.0	3.0	2.3	3.0	2.5
Are targets measurable and is baseline data provided?	2.0	2.0	2.5	2.3	2.0	2.3
Is there a mix of targets - output and outcome?	2.0	2.0	3.0	1.3	2.0	2.1
(7) Risk Management						
Have you identified the most significant risks to achievement of your team plan objectives, using the corporate risk framework?	3.0	3.0	2.5	2.0	3.0	2.6
Are these risks recorded on a risk register?	3.0	3.0	3.0	1.3	3.0	2.5
(8) Human Resources						
Is there a plan for the team's training and development needs?	2.0	1.5	2.5	2.0	2.0	2.1
Has workforce planning been incorporated in the plan?	2.0	1.0	2.5	2.0	2.0	2.0
(9) Value for Money						
Does the plan demonstrate how value for money will be provided?	2.0	1.5	2.5	1.3	1.0	1.7
Has the team set out what it will need to reduce, stop or do differently to work within current and future budgets?	2.0	0.0	2.5	1.3	2.03	1.5

