COMMITTEE: RACE ADVISORY FORUM

DATE: 8 OCTOBER 2007

SUBJECT: COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT SERVICE IMPROVEMENT PLAN

REPORT BY: HEAD OF LEISURE AND COMMUNITY

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WARDS AFFECTED: ALL

RECOMMENDATION

1   The Forum is recommended to note the progress made on the attached Improvement Plan for the Community Development service.

REPORT

2   The Improvement Plan attached as Appendix A to this report arises largely from an investigation of the Community Development service commissioned in December 2005 by the Director of Housing and Community Living. The investigation was commissioned as a consequence of a cluster of concerns raised by a previous member of staff and some current (then) staff within the service. These concerns appeared to have a common theme of dissatisfaction with the management of the service. They included issues which were previously the subject of internal complaints on a variety of matters, including racial discrimination.

3   The investigation was conducted by a senior human resources manager from another department in the Council, a manager from another division in the Department and, to ensure external validation, Lutfur Ali, Director of Diversity at Tribal Resourcing was appointed to advise the investigation. Lutfur has held a number of senior positions including Head of Equalities and Diversities for the Department of Health. He was recently Advisor to the Zahid Mubarek enquiry.

4   Initially, the investigating team interviewed three complainants, which generated the need to interview a further 24 individuals. This process necessarily took a significant time to complete. After the completion of this fact finding stage of the investigation and whilst the findings were being discussed and drafted into a report, a previous report was made known to the investigating officers. It had been written in 2001 following an investigation into the then Youth and Community section in the Chief Executive's Department. The investigation team took time to consider the earlier report and determined that the two investigations were similar and that the conclusions drawn were largely consistent. The existence of the report, however, pointed to the fact that the issues addressed in the investigation were of a longstanding nature, particularly with regard to the Community Development service.

5   The investigation team produced its report in December 2006. the contents of the report were made know in the first week of December respectively to:

- the initial complainant;
- human resource and service managers;
- Councillors; and
- the staff within the Community Development service.

In all cases, as well as making known the contents of the report, the Director of Housing and Community Living and the Head of Leisure and Community made it clear that the development of an improvement plan for the service was an absolute priority.

6   In developing the appended Plan, due regard was paid to the significant changes that have occurred in the Community Development service between the commissioning of the investigation and the publication of the report. The changes were necessary in order to meet the budgetary requirement of the Council. However, because the Director and Head of Service had been made aware of concerns around service reorganisations, those changes were made fully in line with the Council's published and agreed policies, procedures and practices. Consequently, the Service Improvement Plan contains work which was conducted ahead of the publication of the investigation report to reflect the transparency of the change process. The Plan then addresses all of the recommendations contained in the investigation report as they relate to the Community Development service.

7   The Improvement Plan was shared with the Community Development staff and was amended as a result of that consultation. It was also shared with the investigation team.

8   The investigation raised issues and made recommendations which were not specific to the Community Development service. In addition, Council has passed a motion in respect of the report's findings which addressed these generic issues. Consequently, the HR Forum and the Council's new People Strategy Group, chaired by the Director of Housing and Community Living, has begun to develop an improvement plan to address the wider human resource issues raised through the investigation. In addition, the Council's Performance, Resources and Assets Scrutiny Committee has begun an investigation into the underpinning HR policies that seek to ensure equality.

STAFFING IMPLICATIONS

9   The Service Improvement Plan contains a number of actions which impact positively upon staff. In particular, the plan identifies the need to ensure that all staff have a clear understanding of the requirements of their roles, their personal and group targets, their priorities and their expectations for training and development. Individual training and development plans are a key component in improving the service.

EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

10   Equality Impact Assessments were conducted with regard to the restructured service in respect of both the staff and the service users. The action plans arising also form part of the service's and respective managers' targets for the coming year.

STAKEHOLDERS CONSULTATIONS

11   It was important that the Service Improvement plan was, as far as possible, owned by the staff within the service. It was also important that the investigation team felt that its recommendations have been understood and accepted. For those reasons, and as indicated in 7 above, the staff and the investigation teams received drafts of the plan and were asked to comment on the plan. The trade unions were also provided with a copy of the plan. As a result, changes were incorporated into the plan appended to this report. They include:

- putting back the target dates by two months for the surveys and resulting action plans to "allow for meaningful consultation and for full consideration of the results of the surveys"; and
- adding the final two actions concerning the new strategy for community development and support for Neighbourhood Partnerships to "provide a clear indication of the progress we are making post restructure to support the development of local communities" and to demonstrate the service's need "to work with Luton's diverse communities to achieve the development of a [strategy] that will lead to improved quality of life and improved social cohesion".

12   Also included in the Plan are actions relating to ensuring that the use of proper HR procedures and policies is audited and that, in particular, HR involvement is part of all selection processes.

CONCLUSION

13   Members of the Forum will note that much of the Service Improvement Plan has been completed. Surveys of staff and users have still to be completed. However, there is still considerable work outside of the plan to undertake to resolve some of the work place cultures that have developed over many years. This is a much more long term issue and can only be resolved through the demonstration that proper, fair and transparent HR procedures are conducted as a matter of course.

APPENDIX

A   Community Development Service Improvement Plan (Draft)

BACKGROUND PAPER

Report of an Investigation of the Community Development Service, Luton Borough Council – 6 December 2006

LUTON BOROUGH COUNCIL

HOUSING & COMMUNITY LIVING DEPARTMENT

LEISURE & COMMUNITY DIVISION

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT SERVICE IMPROVEMENT PLAN

SEPTEMBER 2007

Foreword

This improvement plan has been developed in response to an investigation conducted into complaints made by staff working within the Community Development service. The plan addresses the recommendations of the investigation, but also includes, for completeness, work that has been in progress since the complaints were first received, in particular the process undertaken to restructure the service that has been in development since March 2006. This process has, in many respects, acknowledged weaknesses in the service that are now explicitly referenced in the investigation's report.

Investigation Recommendation	Activity	Responsible Person(s)	Target	Complete
	Commission risk assessment (RA) of service best value review (BVR) from Tribal Consulting	Corporate Director	February 2006	√
	Meet service supervisory personnel to discuss RA outcome	Corporate Director	2 March 2006	√
	Consultation with all service staff of RA	Corporate Director/Tribal	29 & 31 March 2006	√
	Consultation on RA with trade unions at JNCC	Corporate Director	3 April 2006	√
	Further consultation meeting with trade unions	Head of Service/HR	18 April 2006	√
	Consultation with all service staff on first draft of restructuring proposals.	Head of Service/HR	3 & 5 May 2006	√
	Formal consultation with trade unions following issue of Section 188 notice.	Head of Service/HR	12 May 2006	√
	Individual consultation meetings with staff identified as "at risk"	Head of Service/HR	18 May – 23 June 2006	√
	Formal consultation with trade unions.	Head of Service/HR	2 June 2006	√
	Report to Executive proposing new service structure (approved for Admin Committee to consider staffing implications but called in for Scrutiny)	Head of Service	5 June 2006	√
	Consultation meeting with Duty officer representatives	Head of Service/HR	9 June 2006	√
	Progress report to trade unions at JNCC	Head of Service	12 June 2006	√
	Report to Scrutiny proposing new structure (approved for consideration by Admin Committee	Head of Service	22 June 2006	√
	Report to Administration Committee (approved but referred to Council)	Head of Service	13 July 2006	√
	Consultation with trade unions re implementation proposals in the light of referral to Council	Head of Service/HR	21 July 2006	√

Investigation Recommendation	Activity	Responsible Person(s)	Target	Complete
	Update to JNCC	Head of Service	14 August 2006	√
	Council considers restructuring report (approved)	Portfolio Holder	5 September 2006	√
√	Service Equality Impact Assessment commences	Service Manager	11 September 2006	√
	Individual notice interviews for staff "at risk"	Head of Service/HR	12 – 15 September 2006	√
	Recruitment Interviews	Head of service/HR	4 – 9 October 2006	√
	Project Officers' meetings to identify responsibilities	Head of Service/Service Manager	20 November 2006	√
	New Structure Induction 1 – Project Officers/Unit Development Managers/Training & Support/Admin, Finance &Information	Head of Service/Service Manager	22 November 2006	√
	New Structure Induction 2 – Unit Development Managers/ Project Officer responsible/Admin, Finance & Information	Head of Service/Service Manager	27 November 2006	√
	Unit Development Managers allocated responsibilities	Service Manager	30 November 2006	√
	New Structure Induction 3 – Unit Development Managers and all Centre based staff/Training Support/Admin, Finance & Information	Head of Service/Service Manager	1 December 2006	√
√	(i) Inductions to include statement of acceptable behaviour including issues of equality, racial and religious discrimination, second employment, management committees, supervision and appraisal, roles and responsibilities and fair selection. (ii) To be followed up in writing to all staff.	Head of Service	15 December 2006 31 January 2007	√ √

Investigation Recommendation	Activity	Responsible Person(s)	Target	Complete
	New management arrangements commence formally	Head of Service	4 December 2006	√
	Briefing for Members on investigation outcomes	Corporate Director	5 December 2006	√
√	Staff meeting to communicate outcome of service investigation	Corporate Director	6 December 2006	√
√	Consider approach to grievances arising from the service	Corporate Director/Head of Service/HR	31 January 2007	√
√	Service Equality Impact Assessment Concluded	Service Manager	26 January 2007	√
√	Draft Training Plan available (proposals attached as Appendices I, II, III)	Service Manager/ Training & Support Manager	31 January 2007	√
	New working patterns established and implemented	Unit Development Managers	29 January 2007	√
√	Initial appraisals conducted, personal targets set and individual training needs identified.	All service managers and supervisors	28 February 2007	√
√	All service proposals to have necessary equalities impact assessments	All service managers	Ongoing	--

Investigation Recommendation	Activity	Responsible Person(s)	Target	Complete
√	Staff and Customer Consultation Surveys	Service Manager	31 May 2007 *Consultation surveys to be issued 1 October; returned by 31 October and baseline data available 13 November. Delayed due to development of survey material and summer period.*	
√	Action Plan from surveys	Head of Service/Service Manager	30 June 2007 *See above.*	
	Commence review of new structure including role of admin and reception staff	Head of Service/Service Manager	1 June 2007 *Review commenced in July but change in administration has extended its life due to new requirements.*	
	Restore Centre programmes to March 2006 levels	Unit Development Managers	30 June 2007	√
	Individual Appraisals against Targets	All managers and supervisors	June to September 2007	

Investigation Recommendation	Activity	Responsible Person(s)	Target	Complete
	Progress work on a new strategy for community development in Luton	Head of Service/Service Manager	31 December 2007	
	Confirm levels of support with Neighbourhood Partnerships	Service manager/ Project Officer	31 March 2007	
	Audit the use of proper HR policies and procedures throughout the service	Service Manager/ Departmental HR	Ongoing	
	Involve Departmental HR in all selection processes	Service Manager/ Departmental HR	Ongoing	

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT SERVICE
PROPOSED TRAINING PLAN

With the Community Development Service now approaching its responsibilities with newly appointed personnel, it becomes essential to match existing post-holders and their areas of responsibility with an appropriate and relevant training programme.

Before we can embark upon devising a Training Plan, we need to conduct a Training Needs Analysis (TNA), which would assess the best way of using available resources to improve the skills of employees and teams. The TNA would involve and engage employees at every stage, engendering a sense of ownership and purpose. A questionnaire specially designed to address training needs is being devised.

INTRODUCTION of MANDATORY CORE TRAINING MODULES

The TNA will satisfy the needs of both the Area Teams as well as individuals by determining what their training needs are and drawing a balance between them.
In order to provide a consistency of approach, where relevant, core training in the following will be initiated for some members of staff who have previously not benefited and matching training with individual learning:

- Health & Safety Modules including Ladder Safety, Managing Safely, Risk Assessment, Workplace Inspection, Display Screen Equipment, Accident Investigation & Reporting, Fire, COSHH, Manual Handling, Accident Investigation for Managers, DSE Assessors, Finance, Disability Discrimination Act.
- Luton's diverse communities make key demands upon staff to be ever vigilant and responsive to a range of cultural needs. The Training & Development Manager proposes to augment the current corporately available Religion, Faith and Belief Equalities course with Cultural Awareness Training, which would celebrate the diverse communities of Luton and encourage Respect, Tolerance and Understanding. The syllabus for this course will include religion, multi-faith calendars, cuisine, clothing/attire, family values, naming systems, historical perspectives and entertainment. The Cultural Awareness training will involve key providers including the Luton Council of Faiths, Youth and Community Organisations as well as prominent Race Equality Council members.
- Anti-Oppressive Practice training to address attitudes, behaviour and obligations in the aftermath of the Stephen Lawrence report.
- Sickness Absence training for all managers and supervisors.
- Engage front-line staff with the council's forthcoming AMBER training programme – a range of learning and development solutions to help LBC staff who have direct contact with customers to develop themselves in line with the council's vision.
- Engage manager's and supervisor's with the council's GOLD – Leadership & Management Development Programme which help to develop 8 key competencies and the skills and knowledge required to be a great manager.

The Training Plan will also help to monitor the training budget costs more realistically, integrate the training into other plans for the development of the service and also the development of the people within it.

LEARNING STYLES

The use of different learning styles is to be adopted to maximise opportunities for staff. These include workshops, distance-learning, reading books and journals, videos and interactive CDs, projects, external consultants, internal on-site training, exchange visits, small group seminars, computers, coaching, on-the-job training, shadowing, and so on. The simplistic approach to training suggests that people learn in different ways, and thus we need to provide different approaches for accessing training in response to the different ways that people learn.

In addition to the above, post-holders with identical responsibilities will be trained to the same level, thereby empowering them to perform their duties with equal direction and purpose.

It is further proposed to promote in-house training opportunities using the key skills of existing staff members. This naturally keeps expenditure down but more importantly allows colleagues to share experiences on a more natural and practical level rather than focusing on theory and conjecture.

COMMUNITY TRAINING SCHOOL

The Luton Community Training School is an innovative project to strengthen and support community development within Luton. It aims to increase local community development capacity in the area amongst individual residents, community/voluntary organisations, Community Development Service employees and the statutory sector by developing skills and expertise.

- The Community Training School's external tender for the EEDA Community Leadership Programme, initially successful but retracted by EEDA due to their own internal procedural change of heart would have secured funding of £188,000 to train staff, volunteers, councillors and members of the community in capacity building and community leadership skills, fully accredited through two separate training providers.
In the absence of this funding (which we intend to pursue at a later date), the Community Development Service is to look towards the provision of <u>Bite Size</u> courses for staff and communities in aspects of centre management, budgeting, health & safety , equal opportunities and forward planning in partnership with existing agencies linked with the Community Training School.

TRAINING RECORDS & APPRAISALS

- Individual Training Records for the Community Development Service are kept updated via Open Door and a separate internal spreadsheet on the K-drive, in addition to hard copy records. It is intended to further update and refresh those details to give as accurate a picture of an individual's training history.
- Each individual will have their own training programme, which is to be addressed at each managerial supervision and appraisal meeting in order to keep abreast of skills matched and future training needs.

CONCLUSION

Training for staff in the Community Development Service will ensure every employee has the relevant skills, knowledge, attitude and understanding to carry out the job for which they have been employed, whilst ensuring the achievement of corporate values and objectives.

Training will help to ensure a quality, cost effective service is provided to customers and ensure organisational objectives are met, in addition to improving job satisfaction and employee retention.

Development

Development for employees is to enhance and gain additional skills, knowledge and attitude to become more effective and efficient in their current role thereby adding additional value by exceeding standards of performance, increasing motivation, job satisfaction and employee retention.

All training and development activities will be carried out in accordance with Equal Opportunities Policy and strategy and will ensure no-one is unfairly discriminated against.

EXAMPLE INDIVIDUAL TRAINING PLAN

CORE TRAINING MODULES
COMMUNITY CENTRE DEVELOPMENT OFFICER

HEALTH & SAFETY
- Ladder Safety
- **Risk Assessment – Module A**
- **Workplace Inspection – Module B**
- Display Screen Equipment – Module C
- Accident Investigation & Reporting – Module D
- Fire – Module E
- **COSHH – Module F**
- **Manual Handling – Module G**
- Noise – Module H
- DSE Assessors – Module I
- **First Aid Refresher – next course due 5th/6th Feb 2007**

CORPORATE COURSES
- Corporate Induction – MANDATORY for new employees
- Customer focussed "AMBER" course to be rolled out next year
- Clear Customer Communications
- **Violence & Aggression – Awareness**
- *Violence & Aggression – Personal Safety Techniques – the 'awareness' training must have already been attended and the need for this training to be identified through a Health & Safety risk assessment on the employee's job.
- Equalities – Buzzwords or The Business
- **Equalities – Disability Discrimination Act**
- Equalities – Religion, faith and belief
- **Equalities – Right and Responsibilities – MANDATORY**
- Equalities – Sexuality Awareness
- Communication Methods @ LBC

MISCELLANEOUS/IN-HOUSE COURSES
- Anti-Oppressive Practice
- Cash handling and Financial Regulations
- Cultural Awareness – Respect, Tolerance & Understanding
- "Up-skilling Staff Signposting" Learners Adult Learner Support certificate
- Community Development & Community Engagement

COURSES ALREADY ATTENDED

Date	Title of Course
20-23-Feb-94	First Aid - Qualifying Course
02-Oct-94	Time Management
25-Jul-96	Violence and Aggression
16-18-Dec-96	Fair Selection
26-Jun-97	Deaf Awareness
17-Dec-97	Module G - Lifting Techniques
27-Jan-98	Module A - Hazard Spotting & Risk Assessment
08-Sep-00	Fair Selection - Refresher
27-Apr-01	Module F - Hazardous Subs.
3-4-Sep-01	First Aid - Refresher Course
02-Mar-04	First Aid - Refresher Course
18-May-04	How to get Funding
26-May-04	Equalities - Understanding your Rights & Responsibilities
27-Jul-04	Module B - Workplace Inspection
09-Sep-04	Finance - Part one - Recommendations for Expenditure
07-Oct-04	Finance - Part two - Control of Expenditure Against Budgets
12-Oct-04	Powersolve
23-Nov-04	Managing Your Staff's Stress
02-Dec-04	Appraisal for Appraisers
21-Jan-05	Outlook
17-Feb-05	How to Induct New Employees
27-Apr-05	How to Deal with Difficult People
14-Sep-05	Equalities - DDA
21-Nov-05	Appraisal for Appraisers
15-Dec-05	Managing P/Shp & Infl Skl
20-Feb-06	Sickness Absence Briefing
23-Feb-06	Focus Groups & Other Qualitative Consultation
02-Mar-06	Disciplinary & Grievance Brief
27-Sep-06	Age Discrimination

Skills Set and Behaviour Assessment – Community Development (General)

These sheets are to be completed by both staff member and their line manager at their supervision meeting focusing on Training & Development needs.

Score yourself out of 10 for each skill and behaviour. Validate your scores by discussing them with your line manager (these scores go in the '2nd Opinion' column and form the basis of the assessment). At the same time agree with your line manager whether each skill and behaviour is essential or desirable for the effective performance of your role. If not applicable, then just fill in N/A.

Your personal development priorities are therefore the lowest scores in the essential skills and behaviours. This information can then be used to track your individual developmental needs.

NAME:
POST:
LINE MANAGER:

Skills and work competency areas	Self-Assessment	2nd Opinion	Essential/ Desirable (E/D)
1 Using and developing my knowledge.			
2 Researching, investigating and problem-solving.			
3 Communicating outwardly: face-to-face, phone, email, etc.			
4 Listening and interpretation, establishing rapport, understanding needs.			
5 Developing solutions and agreeing things with people.			
6 Financial understanding and ability.			
7 Speaking and presenting to groups.			
8 Helping or coaching or teaching or training others.			
9 Using information and communications technology (ICT or IT).			
10 Technical appreciation and use of equipment/tools/machinery for my area/centre and related areas.			
11 Understanding and making the most of my relationships with people and groups.			
12 Community Development awareness and its consideration in planning, decision-making, etc.			
13 Taking initiative and responsibility, e.g., decision-making, project management, running meetings.			
14 Visioning, creating, and inspiring others with my ideas.			
15 Managing time, planning, being effective, efficient, productive, and reliable.			
16 Appreciating/applying social responsibility, sustainability, humanity and ethical			

considerations.			

NAME:
POST:
LINE MANAGER:

Behaviours, Attitudes and Personal Style	Self-Assessment	2nd Opinion	Essential/Desirable (E/D)
1 Striving for personal development.			
2 Taking personal responsibility to resolve problems, even those not of my own making.			
3 Understanding the way people really feel.			
4 Developing positive relationships.			
5 Keeping focused and productive, reliable and dependable.			
6 Planning how to achieve my work and personal goals.			
7 Managing stress and conflict.			
8 Managing upwards and sideways (my managerial superiors and my peers).			
9 Contributing positively to team/service morale and spirit.			
10 Seeking and picking up responsibility that I see waiting to be filled.			
11 Team-working.			
12 Having compassion and care for others.			
13 Using integrity and ethics in my judgement about work and organisational issues.			