



Equality Assessment Impact of Redesign on Service Users

Service area:	Standards and Improvement
Name of service being reorganised:	Business Support
Officer leading on assessment:	Suzanne Payne, Head of Policy, Performance and Communications
Other staff involved:	Henry Kilpin, Planning and Partnerships Officer

1. Summarise details of proposed redesign

Provide details of the proposed redesign. Include information about the previous structure and the new proposed structure.

The Business Support Team Model has been designed to meet the current and future needs of Achieving for Children as a new organisation delivering services for the two founding Councils.

The vision for the Business Support is to establish service based Business Support Teams which will work together to provide effective business and PA support which:

- focuses on the operational needs of the service and what works best;
- creates a flexible, organisational structure which supports the current and future needs of Achieving for Children;
- maximises available resources and builds resilience by utilising business support staff across a range of services;
- implement lean processes that eliminate duplication, unnecessary business support and PA processes and so reduces costs;
- is high performing, meeting agreed standards of practice and levels of performance and compliance;
- provides a clear career path for business support staff within Achieving for Children; and
- provides an improved experience for internal and external clients.

How will the Business Support Teams work?

- Officers completing Business Support and PA tasks will be grouped together in service focused Business Support Teams. There will be a PA Team which will provided dedicated executive support to the senior leadership team.
- Business support staff within buildings in the community, such as Moor Lane or the Croft Centre will be included in the Business Support Model but will not form part of the central teams. They will link into a service team and share common job profiles and use common processes and systems.
- Teams will initially be split across a number of sites, based in locations that best serve business needs. Initially staff numbers and locations will be based on current service delivery, but in the future this may change.
- There will be a clear career progression path for PA and business support staff within the Business Support Team Model. The business support posts will be on linked scales, enabling progression up the scale based on performance.
- Wherever possible, the Business Support Teams will support and promote the Way to Work apprenticeship programme and business support apprentice posts will form part of the Business Support Team Model. This is so that we are able to support young people

into employment as well as 'grow our own' talent. In the future the aim will be for each team to have at least one Way to Work apprentice.

- Funding for Business Support will be managed centrally, with ring-fenced funding allocated annually to departments to manage their business support needs. Allocation of Way to work apprentices will also be managed centrally, and will be used to provide additional support to teams with the greatest need.
- There will be a continued need to focus on providing specialist business support and staff will be expected to retain a good level of knowledge in the area they are supporting.
- PA and business support processes and systems will be common across Achieving for Children.
- PA and business support staff will be able to work flexibly across the directorate their Business Support Team is attached to, and will be expected to step in and provide support to meet the needs of the whole organisation.
- PA and business support staff will have common job profiles and pay scales will be applied consistently and fairly across the organisation
- The working patterns of business support and PA staff will be determined by business needs; in most cases this will accommodate part time working arrangements.
- Work of the team will be agreed between the Business Support Team Leader and the Service, it will be managed using a simple Service Level Agreement which will capture how this will be done and what the agreed timescales for managing tasks will be
- PA and business support staff will be trained to effectively use all IT systems to make business support tasks quicker, easier and cost effective.

Business Support Team Model

There will be nine Business Support Teams providing support for all services within Achieving for Children. The teams are service focused and location based.

- Each team will be supervised by a Business Support Team Leader who will be responsible for managing staff in their team. This model may be virtual in some areas, and employ a matrix style of management, for example Children's Social Care. Some tasks will be overseen by team managers within the service so that business support staff are aware of particular clients' needs or legislative responsibilities.
- All Business Support Team Leaders will be responsible for staff development, workload management and ensuring common processes and systems are in place and implemented. They will also be responsible for carrying out higher levels of business and PA support.
- The Business Support Team Leader will report to the Director of the Service, or a nominated Service Head/Team Manager but will be expected to liaise with service managers, other team leaders and the Company Secretary and Head of Business Support.
- The Company Secretary and Head of Business Support will act as the strategic link between all Business Support Teams ensuring that common processes and systems are in place. The Head will also ensure that wherever possible staff in buildings in the community, share common systems and processes. They will be the single point of contact for the business support function.
- The Business Support Team Leaders will support the Company Secretary and Head of Business Support to determine the most efficient and effective methods of working. They will ensure that the needs of the service are met and are of a high standard.
- In order to ensure there is sufficient management support in both localities. Business Support Team Leaders will be expected to work together to ensure that sufficient cover and supervision is in place across teams whilst they are working over a split site.
- In most cases there will be a maximum four layers between any member of staff and the Chief Executive and each manager will have no more than eight direct reports.

What work will the Business Support Team do?

The Business Support Teams will provide PA and business support to either a senior officer or service. Work activities will be service specific and tailored to service needs but will typically encompass the following activities:

- word processing
- audio and copy typing
- data entry
- letter writing
- dealing with telephone and email enquiries
- creating and maintaining filing systems
- keeping diaries
- arranging meetings and appointments and
- organising travel for staff
- using a variety of software packages, such as Microsoft Word, Outlook, Powerpoint, Excel, Access, to produce correspondence and documents and maintain presentations, records, spreadsheets and databases
- devising and maintaining office systems
- booking rooms and conference facilities
- using content management systems to maintain and update websites and internal databases
- attending meetings, taking minutes and keeping notes
- managing and maintaining budgets, including specialist budgets in some cases
- managing invoicing
- liaising with Richmond and Kingston's finance teams on supplier payments
- liaising with staff in other departments and with external contacts
- ordering and maintaining stationery and equipment
- sorting and distributing incoming post and organising and sending outgoing post
- managing generic directorate email boxes
- organising and storing paperwork, documents and computer-based information
- photocopying and printing various documents, sometimes on behalf of other colleagues.
- arranging or support in-house and external events.

Team members will develop knowledge of all of the services they are supporting so that between them they are able to provide a high quality and dedicated business support function.

2. Reasons for redesign

Set out the rationale for the redesign.

In December 2012 the London Borough of Richmond upon Thames and the Royal Borough of Kingston upon Thames Councils agreed to jointly deliver children's services under the banner of Achieving for Children (AfC).

AfC aims to provide value for money for all customers, high quality services and truly customer focused work. We aim to maximise the benefits of sharing expertise and resources across the two boroughs, and reduce management and overhead costs where possible.

The move towards shared services between Kingston and Richmond offers a good opportunity to consider the function and delivery of services, test their effectiveness and identify potential for service development.

The Business Support Model was agreed by senior management on 5 February 2014 to

establish a new way of supporting the delivery of joined up frontline services in Achieving for Children. The model consists of a number of service specific teams which will provide tailored support to service areas whilst also ensuring a consistent and common approach across the whole of Achieving for Children.

The model will bring together Business Support staff managed within the Education and Children's Services in Richmond Council and Learning and Children's Services in Kingston Council. It will also include employees from corporate teams where it has been agreed that those services will transfer to Achieving for Children as a commissioned organisation.

3. What data collection and consultation have you undertaken?

What data and information have you used to complete this equality assessment? What consultation have you carried out with service users to gather their views? How has this fed into the equality assessment?

There were many responses to the Business Support Redesign proposals, most of which have been responded to individually or through staff consultation events. The following table summarises the most common issues/concerns raised and the responses made.

Employees who submitted a comment pertaining to their personal circumstances and options have received a personal response.

Comment/question	Response	Change within business support model
Will I come over on my existing pay scale?	Yes all staff will come over on their existing pay scale and will be protected under the TUPE regulations.	Not applicable
Will being on maternity mean a specific post will be held open	Under maternity legislation the organisation must ensure that any staff who are on maternity leave are offered suitable alternative employment i.e. no worse than the current job in terms of terms and conditions, status and location. In the staff consultation all staff have been matched into a suitable post. Staff on maternity will need to complete a preference form stating the team they wish to work in.	Not applicable
Why there are fewer posts in some teams in the new structure?	In designing the new structure we have had to take account of a reduced budget transferred from Kingston Council to Achieving for Children. This includes three full time posts at grade D that will sit move to Kingston's finance department. Initially these changes will affect the resources in Kingston based business support teams. As we move into the new service, resource decisions will be based on need across the whole of Achieving for	A reduction in resource has been reflected in the following business support teams: Early Help 2 1.9fte grade D SEND 2 (Moor Lane) 2fte grade D The proposed Business Support

	<p>Children and will be looked at in after the redesign is completed.</p> <p>Service managers are aware of the changes to their teams and the implications; wherever possible they have sought to fund additional posts within the structure.</p>	<p>Manager post has been removed and resources have been put back into the Business Support Teams to help provide additional capacity across the structure.</p>
<p>Why have Team Leaders and PAs been matched into specific posts?</p>	<p>Staff that have been matched into role have been based on their current job activities and salary.</p> <p>The current and new salary is also comparable for both the PA and Business Support Team Leader roles.</p>	<p>Not applicable</p>
<p>Why is there a generic job profile, it doesn't set out what I currently do in my job.</p>	<p>The job descriptions are generic as they are for all staff in Achieving for Children. They will be accompanied by a much more detailed work plan and individual learning objectives, which will be determined by the Team Leader and Head of Service.</p>	<p>Not applicable</p>
<p>My role is specialist, but this new role is a generalist role.</p>	<p>The aim and intention of the business support model is to retain specialist support within a framework where common processes can be developed across the whole of the organisation and if <i>necessary</i> step in to provide support to other Achieving for Children functions.</p> <p>The design of the new model retains the specialist nature of business support staff and in many cases staff are in the same location as the teams they are supporting.</p>	<p>The structures reflect the specialist nature of the work, but provide a framework through the business support teams to develop commonality and standards across keys areas, for example, complaints, invoicing, minute taking or data management.</p>
<p>How does the virtual business support hub work in social care?</p>	<p>Staff within children's social care are part 'virtual' business support teams – this has been agreed by the two directors of the service.</p> <p>In practice this means staff will remain within the service area with the Business Support Team Leader providing oversight and a connection with the service, the Business Support Team leader will help to coordinate common business support approaches across the whole of social care.</p>	<p>Not applicable</p>
<p>Who will process invoices for within Achieving for</p>	<p>All invoices will be processed either by the SAP team in Richmond</p>	<p>Funding for three finance posts will be</p>

<p>Children</p>	<p>Council or SAP team in Kingston Council, depending on where the invoice is generated from.</p> <p>There will be an Achieving for Children finance team who will be responsible for all Achieving for Children budgeting, there will be an element of financial support work within Business Support Officers roles, some of these will be more focused than others, for example in the Adoption team.</p>	<p>transferred into Kingston finance team.</p> <p>A dedicated Business Support Officer will be in place for finance activity within the adoption service.</p>
<p>How might you envisage the make-up of the Business Support Teams changing in the future?</p>	<p>So far the redesign has been based on a 'lift and shift' approach, so we are in most cases we are pulling existing resource into the same/similar role in Achieving for Children, however, once the redesign is complete, there will be more attention spent on what the activities of the business support staff are and what the needs of the service are.</p> <p>This will enable us to make better decisions – based on evidence- and shuffle resources around to meet the needs of the whole organisation.</p> <p>The work will be led by the new Company Secretary and Head of Business Support with the assistance of the Team Leaders.</p>	<p>Redesign and support of services in the future is part of all of the Company Secretary and Head of Business Support and Business Support Team Leaders new job profile and function.</p>
<p>Where will business staff be located?</p>	<p>Initially business support staff may not change location, but overtime we hope that staff will be brought closer together to support the business support team model.</p> <p>All business support teams will have a 'base' but in the main staff will be located where there team is based; this may include some split working.</p> <p>Team Leaders will need to work with the support they have in place and determine the best way to distribute resource to meet needs.</p>	<p>The location of the teams is identified in the business support team consultation documents.</p>

<p>Will Business Support staff receive training?</p>	<p>Yes staff will receive training where it is needed. A skills audit will be one of the first activities for the Business Support Team leaders, so there is a clear understanding of what the skills are and what extra support is needed. Each staff member will have a personal development plan capturing the work activities and development required.</p>	<p>Not applicable</p>
<p>Why has my role been demoted from a Business Support Officer to a Business Support Assistant?</p>	<p>The role has not been demoted but there is a different job title. The business support model wanted to capture a range of different support across the organisation. To do this, three different levels of post were created. Staff have been brought into the current organisation on their existing pay scale. As the model has built in career development opportunities for staff who perform well, there will be chances at annual appraisals to be promoted. In addition we expect there to be a number of vacancies at a Business Support Officer level which all staff are able to apply for.</p>	<p>Not applicable</p>
<p>If appointed to a Business Support Team Leader role can I be involved in the recruitment of vacant posts?</p>	<p>Yes, we would expect the Business Support Team Leaders to take a lead in the recruitment of vacant posts.</p>	<p>Not applicable</p>
<p>Will I need to interview for a post?</p>	<p>You will only need to interview for a post if you are applying for a promotion. Everyone else will be matched into a role.</p>	<p>Not applicable</p>
<p>We need to know what work is required from the teams to be supported.</p>	<p>As soon as the redesign is complete and staff are in post Business Team Leaders will work with the Company Secretary and Head of Business Support to map out the required work to support the service. At this stage there will also be mapping of the areas which can be carried out in a more efficient way or across the whole organisation.</p>	<p>Not applicable</p>
<p>How have resources been decided for each team?</p>	<p>At this stage the design is based on a 'lift and shift' of resources so in most cases they are based on current capacity. However, there are some teams that have had to change as a result of reduced budget.</p>	<p>Not applicable</p>

<p>There needs to be a careful mix in all teams of both full time and part time staff</p>	<p>Every effort has been made to ensure that there is at least a minimum level of permanent staff in the structure There are a large number of temporary Way to Work apprentices particularly in the EH 1 and 2 teams.</p> <p>It is recognised that apprentices provide basic business support and need dedicated help to undertake their role and to complete their studies.</p> <p>The current high proportion of apprentices destabilises the management of the Business Support Teams. A plan will be put in place to manage the proportion of Way to Work staff across the organisation, with a view to rebalancing with permanent staff.</p> <p>There is a commitment for at least one Way to Work apprentice in each of the Business Support Teams.</p>	<p>Not applicable</p>
<p>Why are the gradings fixed within the job roles and not on a longer scale?</p>	<p>The model wanted to distinguish between staff providing business support at a lower level and a higher level so that there is a breadth of support at all levels within the business support team. There are linked grades within both business support roles and movement is possible within them based on achievement within the role.</p>	<p>Not applicable</p>
<p>What does support to management mean?</p>	<p>The Business Support Team will be expected to provide a level of diary management to tier three managers within their service only.</p> <p>This should equate to no more than 0.5fte per person.</p> <p>The Business Support Team leader will determine the best way for managing this and be able to deal with any work pressures or conflicts that can arise from this function. Management support can be sought from the Director/Associate Director or the Company Secretary and Head of Business Support.</p>	<p>Not applicable</p>

<p>Who will manage the reception area in Guildhall 1 and at Heatham House?</p>	<p>Staff from the business support hubs in Early Help 1 and 2 can work together to provide sufficient cover for this function.</p>	<p>Resource to cover the reception area are included within the Early Help Business Support Teams 1 and 2</p>
<p>How will the transitions take place between strategic business and Achieving for Children?</p>	<p>There will need to be a short period of time to enable staff to feel settled once the redesign is completed, but soon after work will take place, led by Team Leaders to ensure that all of the needs of the service are understood and mapped out.</p> <p>A clear understanding of the resource available and the skill set of the team will need to be captured, and a plan of action will need to be developed.</p> <p>Some things may not be able to done in the future and many things will need to be completed differently.</p>	<p>Not applicable</p>
<p>How will service level agreements be set up?</p>	<p>The Team Leaders will work with the Company Secretary and Head of Business Support to devise the best approach for managing the work within the service, and setting the standards expected through a service level agreement.</p>	<p>Not applicable</p>
<p>What will happen to the finance posts advertised within the business support redesign?</p>	<p>The finance posts have been advertised to staff within the scope of the redesign. Those that have been successful will remain within Kingston council in the finance team.</p> <p>The remaining posts will go out for external recruitment and will be employed by Kingston Council and not Achieving for Children.</p> <p>Adjustments to existing business support officer roles will need to adjust to take account of the finance work that is transferring out of Achieving for Children.</p>	<p>Not applicable</p>
<p>Why do the teams in Prevention and Early Help not reflect the new directorates and functions within them?</p>	<p>At the time the two new directorates Early Help and directorate for Special Educational Needs and Disabilities were not established. Now that they have, discussions have taken place with the Associate Directors and the design of the business support teams have been</p>	<p>Some changes have been made to the business support teams in the Prevention and Early Help area.</p>

	changed to reflect this.	
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4. Assess the impact of the redesign on service users with regard to each of the protected characteristic groups:

As the Business Support function is primarily internally focused there will be minimal impact on children's services service users, such as children, young people and families. As such, the redesign will not have an impact on any of the protected characteristic groups in Kingston or Richmond.

<i>Protected Group</i>	<i>Findings</i>
<i>Age</i>	N/A
<i>Disability</i>	N/A
<i>Gender (sex)</i>	N/A
<i>Gender reassignment</i>	N/A
<i>Marriage and civil partnership</i>	N/A
<i>Pregnancy and maternity</i>	N/A
<i>Race/ ethnicity</i>	N/A
<i>Religion and belief including non-belief</i>	N/A
<i>Sexual Orientation</i>	N/A

5. What issues have you identified that require action?

Summarise the issues identified in the equality assessment and the actions that will be taken to address these in the table below, for example, making reasonable adjustments to improve accessibility.

The action plan should be drawn up in conjunction with the Directorate Lead Manager for the redesign. Once the equality assessment has been signed off then the actions should be transferred into the relevant Service Plans to ensure that they are followed through and progress monitored.

<i>Issue identified</i>	<i>Planned action</i>	<i>Lead Officer</i>	<i>Completion Date</i>
N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

6. When completed, the equality assessment should be approved by a member of AfC Management Team

Approved by	AfC Equalities Working Group
Date of approval:	April 2014
Date of publication:	May 2014