

## Future Shape Groups

### 1. Introduction

Following members endorsement of the recommendations for the Future Shape programme on December 3<sup>rd</sup> 2008, this paper describes the role, remit, membership and process of a set of groups that will play a major part in bringing about transformational change in Barnet. It then goes on to describe how we will use the outcomes to drive the next stage of the process.

### 2. Background

The Future Shape Programme was conceived in order to respond to a number of very different challenges: A changing national policy context that requires Councils to focus not just on the services they provide but on the outcomes that are being achieved for communities. A changing Borough, with particular pressures created by the success of the area, pressure on infrastructure, and static customer satisfaction. A changing Council which, whilst successful in terms of 'industry' measures, will have to face up to the reality of very low grant settlements by finding new ways to improve performance whilst reducing costs.

To respond to these challenges, Members have taken the view that "the Council should conduct those activities that only the Council can" establishing a tough challenge for the development commissioning activity and alternative forms of service delivery. We now need to determine the best way to realise this goal, understanding that it is a means to an end.

From an organisational development point of view we need to move on to the next stage of development. Becoming a smaller organisation inevitably means approaching the market place. We have already determined however that what we are not just seeking to recreate a mirror image of ourselves through alternative means of provision. That would only serve to lock-in current barriers to efficiency and collaboration. Instead we aim to develop our organisation through partnerships that enable us to harness the innovation and capacity of our own staff as well that of our public, private and third sector partners in bringing about a set of public services that meet the 'future shape tests'.

Services that:

- Cost significantly less.
- Take a different view of need, based on engaging with our population as citizens rather than customers of specific services.
- Are strategic and integrated, ensuring that resources are targeted to achieve priority outcomes.
- Facilitate greater self-help and service co-creation amongst members of our community.

- Are based on a clear contract between the citizens and services.
- Inspire behavioural change amongst our residents and businesses
- Can be accessed on the basis of citizen life challenges.
- Help citizens to achieve better outcomes in their lives
- Are democratically accountable

In order to do this we need to develop an organisation competent to meet the challenges described above. The Future Shape groups will lay the foundations for this work. Their role is to hasten the future. They provide a defining break with the past. Whereas hitherto improvement has been driven within services, it is now recognised that this approach is providing a limited return on resources and increasingly leading to service reduction rather than greater efficiency.

In order to respond to the challenges of the future a new approach is needed. The Future Shape Groups are based therefore, not on organisational departments but on cross cutting functions. They have the potential to link up with staff performing similar functions in partner organisations. This means that they will be well placed to map out developmental paths for the Council that will form the basis for cost reduction and improvement activity over the next five years.

### 3. Report to Members – June 2006

We need to be able to give members clear answers to the questions they raised in December. We must be able to demonstrate

- The level of savings that could be achieved by taking this approach and when they can be expected.
- The improvements possible through the revised configuration.
- The willingness of partners to take part in this model.
- The ability of the market to be able to deliver now and the identification of those areas where we will need to develop the market for the future.
- How the model would enable the continued democratic accountability of services and the capacity of members to represent their constituents interests and needs.
- Whether this model has clear advantage in achieving our goals, over the continuation of the current approach, sufficient for members to invest a substantial proportion of current reserves.

### 4. Role of the Groups in the Future Shape project

The Groups are appointed by and accountable to the Future Shape Programme Board. They will help the Programme Board to ensure that the chosen avenues for development will prove fruitful in achieving the future shape aims.

The focus of the groups is wide ranging, some exploring well trodden paths, some breaking new ground. All of the groups will have a common

set of 'future shape questions' that they set out to answer over the coming months. Having defined their area they should ask

1. What do we do now? What does it cost? What does it achieve?
2. What is the citizen experience? What do they want it to be?
3. How well integrated are we, as a Council and as a partnership?
4. How can we encourage more self-reliance and self-help? How can we inspire behavioural change?
5. What is best practice, what is next practice?
6. What do we want for the future?
7. How can we reduce cost?
8. Can the private sector, add value to what we are trying to achieve?

These questions are not those that we would ask under a CCT or Best Value framework: In the first place we are not talking about recognised services but functions across services. Secondly we are asking questions outside the boundaries of our own organisation. Thirdly we are seeking to transform both organisation and community by finding ways in which the public become involved in co-creating outcomes.

## 5. The Groups

The following provides a high level description of the focus of each group:

**Barnet Strategy** aims to bring together all of those people across public services whose role it is to engage with and determine the aspirations and needs of the people of Barnet and to help service planners to determine the best way to achieve the outcomes people want. This group includes all of those people who track demographic information as well as those in policy development functions. The aim is to

- Rationalise the effectiveness and cost of the way in which the public sector engages with the community
- Gather the data necessary to track key trends in the community
- Help to determine, in dialogue with politicians, commissioners, service providers and the people of the Borough, the services necessary to achieve the outcomes people want

**The Vehicle** was first mooted at the outset of the Future Shape project and work has been undertaken to define it. It has always been envisaged that the vehicle has a number of functions

1. To interpret the needs statements being generated through Barnet Strategy
2. To work with commissioners to determine the outcomes they want to achieve
3. To procure, through a range of service delivery options, services that deliver those outcomes
4. To manage the alliances that are formed through the procurement process

It has always been envisaged that the capabilities required in the list above indicates the need for a combination of organisations. Travelling in the vehicle would be.

1. People who have a deep understanding of the needs and aspirations of politicians and the community
2. People who can design innovative service delivery strategies that mean that better outcomes can be achieved for less cost
3. People who can invest in and run a number of procurement processes
4. People who have funds to invest and who are willing to do that on a risk and reward basis, so that procurement costs would be recouped as a result of arranging the delivery of redesigned services.

Because of the potential scope of this group, discussions with colleagues have resulted in a suggestion that the work should be focus initially on disadvantaged families to 'prove the concept' that the vehicle idea could work. Hence the group would:

1. Look at the current approach to supporting disadvantaged families and evaluate it from a citizen and an organisational perspective
2. Redesign the way in which people are supported
3. Consider the cost implications of the redesigned services

The outcomes will be used as an illustrative example in discussions with potential organisations that have the capabilities outlined above. The report back to members will then take a view on the feasibility of the Vehicle concept.

**Barnet Support** incorporates the full range of 'back office' functions, HR, ICT, Legal, Finance, Audit, Procurement. Public private partnerships in this area are already reasonably commonplace. The focus for this group is to determine the future requirement for these services in the context of a Council that is externally focussed on the place rather than on itself as an organisation. Might there be, for example, a trading opportunity to sell a set of support services to Businesses in Barnet or to other London Boroughs?

**Barnet Property** pulls together those within the Council and amongst our partners to consider whether savings can be made and income generated through the rationalisation of property needs within the Borough. This group has clear links to future thinking on citizen access, and also to the use of technology to further modernise way that staff work to reduce desk ratios and ensure that service providers are closer to citizens.

**Barnet Access** aims to simplify access to the range of services and self-help options by providing a common front door across the public sector. In line with future shape themes, access should be citizen focussed, on the basis of life events and lead to a joined up response where necessary.

**Barnet Transact** aims to identify all of those services that are not the core business of the Council, or that are not part of the value chain of

services that are, and seeks to find alternative ways to provide these services. On the basis that the Council should only do what it is obliged to do, this group will develop outline business cases for services where the quick wins can be generated.

**Barnet Assessment** will pull together all of those involved in detailed assessment activity across council departments. It will be concerned primarily with the citizen experience and seek to minimise duplication, enhance the amount of self-assessment and personalisation.

## 6. Group Composition and Process

### Principles of group membership

The groups are time limited and will have a sizeable task to complete. It is important therefore that they are of optimum size; between 8 and 12 people. Membership should be closed to enable each group to develop in a stable way. No substitution should be allowed. Because the purpose of the groups is to carry out creative work, it is important for all people joining the group to have specific knowledge to contribute and to have an open mind so that all options can be explored. No one should have automatic membership. It is vital that no one joins the groups in order to pursue a pre-determined agenda, to block a line of development or simply to "find out what is going on".

### Duration and Frequency

It is envisaged that Groups will meet four times for a day each time, February through May.

### Co-leadership

Groups will be co-led, with one internal and one external facilitator supporting each.

### Future shape programme support

Groups will be supported by either Max Wide or Richard Grice to ensure continuity and consistency. Room bookings and administration will be handled by the Programme office.

### Staff involvement

We will advertise places on each group and invite staff to apply. It is envisaged that staff will write a short piece on what they believe they could bring to each group. Applications will be evaluated on the basis of the principles laid out above. This will be the case even where people are nominated to join.

### Partner involvement

Where possible our partners in the PCT, Police, 3<sup>rd</sup> Sector and Middlesex University will join the groups to achieve the aim of better integration. Work to recruit participants is ongoing and names will be submitted to group leaders as they become available.

### Member involvement

Members will be consulted and kept informed through the normal channels and individual members wanting to join may do so in line with

the principles laid out above, in addition members may hold a particular perspective based on the experiences of their constituents

### **Trade Union involvement**

Representatives of the Trade Unions have been engaged in this process from the start and this will continue. In line with the principles of membership it is not envisaged that they will be formally represented on each group, individuals may apply to join if they wish. Trades Unions may want to submit their views to the groups on how they see these work areas developing, and they will be canvassed for their views on the outcomes of each groups activity prior to the final report in June 09.

### **PWC input**

Our consultants, Price Waterhouse Coopers have been asked to ensure that the groups identify current costs and potential future savings. The exercise carried out last year will provide a basis for this, and they will process the work of the groups in terms of the impact on costs.

### **Market engagement**

Groups are asked to explore the market that exists in their area. This may take the form of inviting private sector providers to describe their activity and achievements. Help will be provided from the Programme Office to identify potential partner organisations

### **The citizen perspective**

The citizen is at the heart of the future shape programme and each group should be fed by the challenging perspective they will bring. This does not mean asking individuals to join as representatives, rather it means using written or audio/video evidence to ensure that groups have constant reference to citizen perspectives

### **External Expertise**

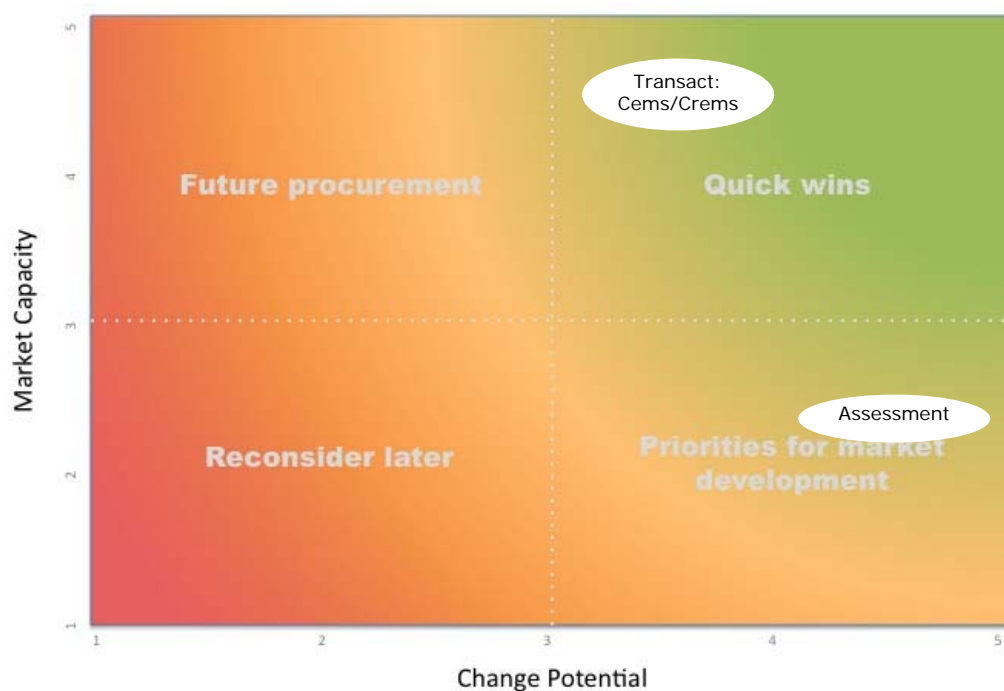
It is vital that the groups do not become internal talking shops and hence they are encouraged to identify and invite external speakers and companies with experience and expertise relevant to the work of the group.

## **7. Outcomes**

The groups are working on a wide ranging set of issues. The goal of doing what only the Council can means that we need to find a way to run a substantial number of procurements for the foreseeable future, with or without the support of a joint venture procurement vehicle. We need to establish a methodology for doing this that will enable us to minimise risk and prioritise our procurement schedule.

It is likely that groups will determine, in the course of answering the future shape questions, two key factors. The first is the case for change; whether having looked at current costs activity, the citizen experience, best and next practice they believe that there are both substantial savings and improvements to be made. The second is the ability of the market place to be able to assist; whether there is market capability in specific or related fields and whether there is any market interest.

Combining these factors and plotting them onto a matrix enables us to create a picture onto which we can map the outcomes of the groups. For example we may find that in the Assessment group we can identify substantial potential for changed practices to contribute to the Future Shape goals of cost reduction, integration, self-help and citizen focus. However when we consider the dimension of market capacity we find few if any providers that do this kind of work, so it becomes a priority for market shaping activity. Applying the same logic to cemeteries and crematoria (within the Transact Group) may give us an outcome of upper range change potential and high end market capacity, making it a priority for a procurement exercise.



It is my expectation that the groups will have outcomes differentiated by this model, which should give us a timetable for procurement and allow us to identify the priorities for market development.

## 8. Timetable for the Groups

Our timescales are tight but I hope that we can turn this to our advantage by impressing on the Groups the urgency of the situation.

Time/activity	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May
Appoint group leaders and members					
Describe current situation					
Citizen view and need for change					
Best and next practice					
Market capacity					
Report writing					

Max Wide

Executive Director of Organisational Development

January 2009