

# **UNISON Barnet: Future Shape of the Council Programme**

September 2008

## **Briefing No. 4 Scope of Contract Reviews**

### **Executive summary**

The Future Shape of the Council programme is reviewing outsourced services. The trade unions welcome these reviews and want to ensure they are comprehensive and rigorous so that lessons can be learnt.

### **Recommendations**

1. The Future Shape of the Council programme should adopt a more comprehensive contract review process based on five criteria – Performance; Impact on the council, service users and staff; Service integration; Contract management and monitoring; and Employment issues.
2. Each review report should be available to the relevant Committee, managers and trade unions.
3. An overview report should be prepared drawing together all the lessons learnt together with recommendations.

### **Introduction**

The London Borough of Barnet commenced the *Future Shape of the Council* project in May 2008 to review the organisation of the Council, challenges and changing demands on the capacity of the Council. The European Services Strategy Unit (ESSU) has been commissioned by Barnet UNISON to provide research and critical analysis for the Branch in the consultation process. This is the fourth of a series of Briefings, which will be produced over the next few months.

The Future Shape of the Council programme is reviewing outsourced services and contracts. The proposed scope of these reviews is said to include:

- *“what was the Council trying to achieve in setting up the contract?”*
- *has this been achieved?*
- *how do service managers view the contract for performance, cost and ease of working with the contractor?*
- *how do customers view the service?*
- *trade union views*
- *what are the contract management arrangements and are they effective?*
- *data about the size, duration and staffing arrangements for the contracts.”*

We believe this is too narrow and recommend the following framework be adopted:

---

## **Proposed Contract Review framework**

### **Scope**

- Objectives of the contract
- Details of the contract
- Rationale for outsourcing
- Extent to which objectives met

### **Content**

#### Performance

- quality of service
- Key Performance Indicators and effectiveness of self-monitoring
- service improvements/innovation implemented
- financial
- interface with council services

#### Impact on the Council, service users and staff

#### Service integration

- coordination with other services
- knock-on effects on the Council

#### Contract management and monitoring

- defaults and financial penalties
- changes in contract costs through variation orders
- compliance with Council corporate policies
- cost of contract management and monitoring

#### Employment issues

- Compliance with TUPE, Code of Practice and contract conditions
- training
- workforce development issues

### **Review process**

Each review should include the views of the following:

- Service users
- Staff and trade unions
- Elected Members
- Service managers

### **Reports**

Each review report should compile all the available evidence and should be available to relevant Committees, managers and trade unions. The overview report should draw

---

together the lessons learnt and make recommendations regarding any required changes in procurement, documentation and contract management and monitoring.



## **European Services Strategy Unit**

(Continuing the work of the Centre for Public Services)

Director, Dexter Whitfield

Adjunct Associate Professor, Australian Institute for Social Research, University of Adelaide

Mobile: 0777 6370884

Email: [dexter.whitfield@gmail.com](mailto:dexter.whitfield@gmail.com)

Web: [www.european-services-strategy.org.uk](http://www.european-services-strategy.org.uk)