

## REPORT TO CABINET

Title: **Lean Systems Thinking Update**

Date: February 2011

Member Reporting: Cllr Saunders

Contact Officer(s): Anthony Kemp (Ext.6484) / David Mead (6503)

Wards affected: All

### 1. SUMMARY

1.1. This report provides Members with an update on the use of Lean Systems Thinking in the Council since the last requested update (October 2010). This report has been written by the each Directorate to provide members with an overview of progress of Lean within their specific services. The report is therefore broken down by the following:

- Resources Directorate
- Environmental Services Directorate
- Children's Services Directorate
- Planning Unit
- Policy and Performance Unit
- Adult and Community Directorate

### 2. RECOMMENDATION

2.1. That Members endorse the continuing development of Lean Systems Thinking across the Council.

What will be different for Residents as a result of this decision?
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Delivery of improved customer service and value for money council services in a time of economic hardship.
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### 3. SUPPORTING INFORMATION

#### 3.1. Resources Directorate

3.1.1. In October 2010 we reported to Cabinet how Lean Systems Thinking was being used to underpin the Resources Restructure. Several reviews had taken place in Resources and short-term benefits had been realised, longer term actions were being implemented. We also reported that the Lean Academy had been running for 4 months and had already helped to support the delivery of gradual cultural change and efficiency savings across the whole Council through its provision of

training and consultancy services. Since October, the Academy has continued to play an integral role in supporting the many Lean Reviews now taking place across the Authority. The Resources Directorate continues its own journey with Lean that has included working with other Directorates on processes that cut across internal lines of management control as well as developing the capability of problem solving within the Directorate.

- 3.1.2. The Academy, now in its eighth month, continues to constructively support the council. It has helped the council achieve the set up and running of 135 Communication Cells. This has not only involved the physical set-up of Cells but also the coaching of teams to engage with the concept of Communication Cells and the assurance of a standard approach to Communication Cells – whoever is running them. The Academy has also provided consultancy support for Lean Reviews taking place across the council – this helps to provide consistency to the reviews as well as ensuring a ‘project management’ approach is taken. The Academy contributes to the development of Lean through providing a monthly internal newsletter that-
- Highlights the benefits being realised by the reviews.
  - Provides tips and re-enforces learning.
  - Plays back to teams the ‘good news’ stories and comments the Academy’s practitioners hear when they are working on in the field.

An example of the internal newsletter ‘Lean Forward’ is shown in Appendix A.

- 3.1.3. Resources also houses the Human Resource provision for the Council and this function has started to play its part in the Lean journey by ensuring that the support of a Lean culture is reflected in a revision of the Organisational Development Strategy that is currently taking place and will be completed within the next three months. HR is also making changes to the following to help underpin the fact that we are a ‘Lean’ working Council:
- Jobs and Careers Web pages highlighting that the Council uses Lean Systems Thinking.
  - Job Accountability guidance to Officers to include mention of Lean where appropriate.
  - Corporate and online induction content to give new starters an initial awareness of Lean.
  - Further embedding of Lean behaviours through including in personal objectives and job accountabilities – something that is already in place for senior roles.
- 3.1.4. Resources have been running 100% Communication Cells and these have proved themselves an excellent way for allowing Officers a place to ‘park’ concerns about the effectiveness of service delivery for the customer. Officers are encouraged to also find solutions for these concerns, so that a culture of continuous improvement is nurtured. Occasionally a concern will have other stakeholders involved, from outside the team, and the level of complexity that requires more detailed problem solving methodology to be applied. In December the Academy provided 30 Officers from the Council with new training on problem solving circles. Within the Resources Directorate, problem solving circles have

been used successfully for several different 'wicked problems'. ICT and Legal services specifically have run problem solving sessions to improve the internal workings of their function and the Resources Leadership Team have used this technique to identify how it can improve communication above and beyond the use of Communication Cells.

- 3.1.5. Recent Lean Reviews have focused on services provided through the Customer Service Centre (CSC) on behalf of other Directorate 'back offices'. Specifically these reviews have included Waste Management, Planning and Schools Admissions. In all three instances the reviews have identified ways to ensure that the customer receives as much of the service as is possible with the Customer Service Centre and that the majority of these services are delivered on a 'one and done' basis, reducing the need for the customer to continually have to contact us. The reviews have also identified where E-service delivery can be improved, allowing greater self-service for the customer. These improvements will enable the council to make improvements and savings during 2011/12 these savings will be made available through budget grassing the relevant service budget.
- 3.1.6. Reviews that took place in HR and Finance Ops identified the need for cross skilling Officers as well as standardising how people worked (the teams had been formed from several smaller teams). This work is well underway with Officers broadening their skill base and being able to answer customer queries at first point of contact. The officers have also completed a series of agreed standard operating procedures that forms the basis for coaching and developing skills across the service.
- 3.1.7. Over the next 6 months the Academy will continue to support Lean Systems Thinking in the Borough by providing training, coaching and development support. We are also starting to talk with external organisations that are showing an interest in learning from us on a commercial basis. On January 14<sup>th</sup> 2011 we were pleased to hold a successful Lean event that saw several other Local Authorities come to hear about the RBWM journey in Lean Systems Thinking. Several senior Officers attended from London and South East Authorities, as well as representatives from the National School of Government. We look forward to potentially providing services to some of these organisations in the future as well as continually supporting the development of the Council's Lean culture.

## **3.2. Environment Directorate**

- 3.2.1. In October 2010 lean training had been rolled out across the directorate and the use of Communication Cells was well established in all service areas. The Parking service had undertaken a Lean review as a pilot scheme and was well advanced in delivering the action plan. Two further Lean reviews had been identified for school transport applications and also the process for temporary road closures.
- 3.2.2. Across the directorate there are a number of encouraging changes that will inevitably bring efficiencies to our service area. Member and Officer delegations have been simplified and the contract rules are under review. Teams are now

actively identifying efficiencies in their day to day work e.g. the process for authorising street café licences used to take approximately 10 to 15 hours of Officer time and involved several departments. Now this process is done in one team and online and takes less than 50% of the input. Another good example is where Streetcare operations plan to purchase smaller quantities of tarmac which will reduce the current expenditure on waste being recycled and heating expenditure for the hot boxes which keep the material at a set temperature.

- 3.2.3. In Building Services using Lean concepts has brought together the performance management and project management process used by the team to focus on delivery of building and services projects on time and on budget to support schools and other community buildings.
- 3.2.4. Similarly Property Services have brought together the performance systems for managing the Council property portfolio to focus on the £3.5 million revenue income to the Council and specific project delivery.
- 3.2.5. With the introduction of a new asset management system – Technology Forge and the rationalisation of the service contract invoicing system there are now fewer payments to process.
- 3.2.6. We are currently reviewing all of our performance indicators in order to streamline reporting and keep only those that are mandatory or add value in running the service for Residents.
- 3.2.7. The average Communication Cell in Environment is a ten minute weekly meeting replacing monthly team meetings of up to two hours. For our directorate this releases roughly 3000 hours of Officer time annually. Although this is a less tangible financial saving, the Officer time freed up and the time saved through Lean reviews is supporting vacancies that otherwise would need to be filled. The other main benefit from Communication Cells is teams are better and more consistently informed and can put ideas forward more easily. The following comments are an example of recent team feedback:
  - *“Everyone has the opportunity to input”*
  - *“Problems are flagged weekly and not allowed to build”*
  - *“They are short, succinct and efficient”*
- 3.2.8. The use of ‘Concern, Cause, Countermeasure’ is now normal working practice and the first teams generated problem solving circles are starting to emerge. Some teams have attended specific training focussed on problem solving techniques and at our recent senior managers team meeting we used ‘Edward De Bono’s 6 thinking hats’ to look at risks, achievements and possibilities for the further use of Lean systems in our service.
- 3.2.9. The Lean review of the home to school transport application process engaged the transport team with colleagues in the Education Admissions team and delivered a jointly designed improved process which benefits the customer, and delivers financial savings. Joint reviews across service areas assist in breaking down a silo culture, the latest example of which is the recent Lean review to improve the interface between Waste Services and the CSC.
- 3.2.10. Allied to the Lean reviews are the ‘Cluster’ projects which have been established to review similar work streams irrespective of service areas e.g. enforcement and

licensing. The 'Cluster' projects utilises Lean principles and is based on cutting across silos through engagement from various service areas.

- 3.2.11. Financial savings are being realised from Lean activity across a number of our service areas:

The Parking service has reduced running costs by £100,000 for 2010/11, which will reduce by a further £50,000 in 2011/12 giving a saving of **£150,000 per year**.

Changes to the street café licence processes will equate to a saving of approximately **£7,000 per year**.

- 3.2.12. We invested £7,000 on 16 mechanical grit spreaders for Winter Service. These enable just the right amount of grit to be evenly distributed on our footways saving sufficient material costs to pay for themselves within the first two weeks of severe weather. From January 2011 we are saving approximately £2,000 per week during gritting. This could save up to **£5,000 per year**.



*One of the new mechanical grit spreaders in Maidenhead High Street*

- 3.2.13. Ending the hot box contract at the end of March 2011 and not having to fuel them will save an estimated **£20,000 per year**.
- 3.2.14. The redesigned home to school transport process identified a specific activity which can be absorbed into existing resource saving approximately **£3,500 per year** (100 hours at an average hourly rate of £35). Additionally, the redesigned process has enabled an existing vacancy to be released delivering an ongoing saving of approximately **£28,000 per year**.
- 3.2.15. The current total savings are anticipated to be in excess of **£200,000 per year** from April 2011 and these are all built in to the directorate's savings and efficiency targets.
- 3.2.16. Over the next 6 months we will be taking forward the action plans from our Lean reviews, looking for new ideas for efficiencies that add value for the customer and developing the following initiatives:
- Public Protection plan to make better use of virtual Communication Cells for remote working teams.
  - We will build on existing work to deliver a more efficient road safety service.
  - We will review our contracts, including increased use of ECI (Early Contractor Involvement) on engineering projects. This process assists in eliminating duplication and looks for ways to add value for the customer by working more closely with suppliers.

- We aim to fully automate highway records so that customers can have direct access.
- We are looking at ways to maximise income from NRSWA (New Roads and Street Works Act).
- We will standardise response letters for recurring queries and make better use of FAQ's.
- We will progress changes in software which would further reduce CCTV running costs.
- We plan to maximise the use of tools such as Google Earth to deal with simple project enquiries to reduce site visits.
- We will continue to develop the new asset management system to release time and efficiency savings.
- We are reviewing Highways 'Confirm' software, possibly moving to a 'hosted' service to reduce down time and ease implementation of upgrades to the software.

### 3.3. Children's Services Directorate

- 3.3.1. Children's Services Teams continue to embrace Lean approaches in their work and the initiative enables all teams to contribute their creative or innovative ideas on how to effect improvement. All teams now have Communication Cells set up and are finding them particularly useful for monitoring 3Cs and performance, as well as allowing time to discuss the local impact of changes in legislation and government priorities, and discuss how these should be communicated. Those teams who work to statutory timescales are now able to see at a glance the status of the work flow and better anticipate any blocks or delays.

Below is a summary listing of where lean has been implemented.

Service	Lean Implementation, Actions & Improvements
Referral & Assessment and Children in Need teams	This team has well established Communication Cells, used to manage workflow.
Integrated Learning Difficulties & Disabilities Service	<p>The LDD Service now has a well established Communication Cell that is used to manage workflow and broad service targets and priorities.</p> <p>The wider concept of Lean has enabled significant reshaping of roles and responsibilities within the service to further develop the integrated model.</p>
Berkshire Adoption Advisory Service (BAAS)	All the team have now received Lean training and meet roughly twice each month to consider Lean initiatives and how to implement them. The Communication Cell is used twice weekly monitor the 3Cs – to deal both with those problems that arise on

	<p>a daily basis and those that may have been around for longer. Several changes have been made as a result:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The team no longer double check indirect contact letters prior to sending them out, as the risk of significant error was assessed as negligible. This has reduced the workload in this area.</li> <li>• Information is not now resent to Adoption Panel members if it was not included in the papers delivered to BAAS, which has resulted in cost savings.</li> <li>• All teams were provided with copies of checklists used by the Panel adviser, to try to promote quality assurance. Any issues relating to papers are followed up and recorded on the 3Cs document, which has resulted in an improvement in the quality of reports.</li> <li>• BAAS have reviewed the process for requesting feedback from birth family members. Feedback forms are now handed to them following the first session with the project worker, which has resulted in more feedback being received.</li> </ul> <p>Part-time team members find the Communication Cell particularly useful as it helps to keep them up to date with developments and supports better communication. Overall, the team find that Lean helps them to retain their focus on customers and consider ways to continuously improve.</p>
<p>Quality Assurance Team</p>	<p>As a result of 3C problem-solving activity, communication with Police Intelligence has significantly improved for children subject to a child protection plan.</p> <p>The delivery of Looked After Children Statutory Review minutes has improved since tracking in the weekly Communication Cell meetings.</p>
<p>Families and Young People Team</p>	<p>Completion of Skills matrix at Service Manager level has helped to identify common core skills required from Service Manager roles and current mix within the team.</p>
<p>Families and Young People</p>	<p>Communication Cells in Family Support Service have helped to focus service work on outcomes that can be changed. The re launch and introduction of Common Assessment Framework (CAF) as main framework for early intervention, which reduces duplication of different agencies' assessments and referral forms' and provides a single common system to</p>

	<p>support early intervention.</p> <p>The set up of a 'Step Down' protocol with Children's Social Care which allows social services assessments to be converted into CAFs without cutting and pasting into different form, again providing an administratively lean process to avoid waste.</p>
Education & Childcare Services	<p>A workshop focusing on duplication of efforts between Home to School Transport and Admissions has been held. Proposals are now actively in hand to transfer some budget and functions from Transport to Admissions. This will reduce overall costs and provide residents with one point of contact for school admissions and eligibility for home to school transport.</p> <p>Within School Admissions, proposals being developed as a result of above workshop to improve residents' experience by having to provide information only once. Possible harmonisation of the IT system with the one in Transport could save 66 hours a year of duplication of information.</p> <p>New SEN Regulations require a more formal approach to a part of the annual review process in Special Educational Needs, with a significant increase in the workload. The team has therefore initiated a Lean review of the 'statementing' process as a whole to identify ways of absorbing the new regulations within existing structures and staffing. This review commenced on 10 January.</p>
Places and Capital Team	<p>Team Manager is attending Managing Change course. Communication Cell operates fortnightly. Team is investigating the suggestion that the new project management systems should liaise with those who are implementing the new Technology Forge project management module in order to streamline procedures across both systems. Team is developing increased use of GIS for school information.</p>
Psychology, Inclusion and Healthy Minds Service	<p>Principles of Lean shared and a Communication Cell set up to establish and sustain communication across four sub teams who do not share a common office base.</p>
Education & Childcare Advisory Service	<p>Effective Communication Cell enables sharing of information across a diverse range of roles, reducing duplication and sustaining an up to date range of government thinking and education policy. Visual summaries of Ofsted judgement and childminders/early year's settings and schools enhance service understanding of our targeted areas of need.</p>
Teaching and Support Service	<p>Communication Cell being used more productively across the services.</p>

### 3.4. Planning Unit

- 3.4.1. As reported in October 2010, an emphasis on applying LEAN methodology to the development control and support services practice was made. Key achievements were outlined including a reduction in delay for processing applications and an increase in customer satisfaction from around 72% to 85%, despite less teams. Communication Cells were being introduced in all areas within the service.
- 3.4.2. Communication Cells are now an active part of the life of the unit, with some meeting daily and all meeting at least weekly. Comments have highlighted the benefits of a greater awareness of what is going on. Colleagues have also commented on the greater level of contact and intimacy brought about by a quick physical meeting as being a positive in terms of team building. Enabling a focus on what is important to the organisation and Unit by way of visual representation has also been important, with far greater awareness observed over the finances underpinning the Units service resulting in teams actively engaged in money saving and making ideas such as charging for pre-app advice on certain buildings and trees.
- 3.4.3. A Lean approach to the revision of the performance indicators within the Service Area Score Card (Balanced Scorecard) has been taken by the Unit, with measures being made to address issues raised by LEAN analysis and customer requirements, rather than measuring something because we can or we are advised we should. For example the number of applications invalid at first time of receipt, which results in waste and failure management, is being assessed and advice given to agents / applicants to reduce this.
- 3.4.4. The writing down of concerns and causes has led to quicker action to resolve the issue, e.g. the lack of awareness around actions necessary in the event of a fire was resolved by the officer responsible co-ordinating with Health and Safety and a simple edict being issued to all staff as to what is expected and where to meet in the event of an evacuation. Similarly issues arising from teams workplace safety assessments were addressed through the 3C's methodology.
- 3.4.5. A Lean review has been carried out between the Development Control and Customer Service Centre interface. Quicker and cheaper methods of working have been identified and an action plan is being drawn up to enable implementation. It is considered that with appropriate changes up to half a Development Control officer resource (typically £15 – 20K) time will be released from answering phones and dealing with lower level enquiries.
- 3.4.6. A Lean review of the service provided by the Tree Team took place in late 2010. This identified a number of areas where methods of working have been made more efficient saving Officers time. A Key initiative was the mapping of activities carried out in making Tree Preservation Orders. TPO's have historically been signed and sealed by Legal Services with the customer receiving a photocopy of the sealed document. This created waiting times of up to a week due to the batching of documents to be sealed as the machinery dictates this way of

working. The Lean review researched why, once the TPO detail was created, it needed to be signed and sealed by Legal before returning to the Tree team. Liaising with the Head of Legal Services, the Tree Team now have delegated signatories within their Service Area and sealing is not required. A TPO has since been completed within an hour.

- 3.4.7. Overall the Lean exercise, together with an assessment of priorities, has enabled the tree team to respond more quickly with customer enquiries and make TPO's more efficiently despite the loss of one officer (25% of staff resource) over the past 6 months, equating to around £25K.
- 3.4.8. The BC Service has been stretched with reduction of technical staff during 2010/11. The need for a Lean review has been identified for the entire BC Service – across both technical and support functions. This work was approved by the Lean Board at the end of last year.
- 3.4.9. The implementation of the DC / Customer Contact Centre Lean review will take place in the next 6 months.

### **3.5. Policy and Performance Unit**

- 3.5.1. In October 2010 Policy and Performance had five out of seven Communication Cells up and running, the lean experience was still in its infancy with a number of initiatives at early stages of development. One of the key initiatives was to move away from silo-based data gathering scenario to a joined up performance management process, enabling better links with areas such as Risk Management.
- 3.5.2. Communication Cells have now been set up in all seven areas since October, and are run on a very regular basis (most at least weekly). In one team, "working from home" days have been moved enabling the whole team to meet regularly at the Communication Cell. This encourages team building, communication, and identification of cross cutting issues.
- 3.5.3. The actual running of the Communication Cell has also developed since the last progress update e.g. one team started off having very lengthy meetings, however this has developed into a much more focussed session, with all the key elements of the Communication Cell being covered but much more efficiently and effectively, with the meeting time reduced by over 50%.
- 3.5.4. The 3C's document has been embraced fully, with one team using this tool extensively to assist 2 functions which operate in different locations. Following the Chief Executive's visit to another team's Communication Cell more concerns have been recorded on the 3C's form throughout the week and not just at the meetings. Responsibility for resolving these has been shared out, so encouraging a team effort rather than expecting management to solve all problems. In very high profile areas such as Ceremonial and Civic Events, State Visits, and Elections, 3C's has contributed to the team taking action quickly and effectively.
- 3.5.5. As described in the update in October, the Performance Management System (PMS) is an activity that cuts across all directorates and a key function of Policy

and Performance and therefore an important area to review and continually improve. New indicators have been added across all directorates including monitoring the number of forms reviewed under the banner of reducing the burden for our residents, along with budget performance information. There is now an initiative well underway to review the whole suite of indicators within the RBWM PMS (to include the removal of those National Indicators that have been withdrawn) and will be complete in time for reporting in the new financial year (2011/12). Key strategic risk links have also been made within the PMS, alongside suggested themes to enable cross cutting views of areas such as economic health, crime and customer feedback.

3.5.6. Policy and Performance has also organised report writing guidance and training to streamline the length and complexity of reports by introducing consistency across the Council, in keeping with the Borough's commitment to putting residents first. This will enable Officers to write succinct reports, saving paper, and assist in the timely submission of reports. The number of reports submitted late to committee are monitored on the relevant team's communication cell, although at present figures are consistently higher than the target set. Several training sessions have been set up, the first being delivered in February. The project management methodology has also been reviewed to remove duplication (a significant waste). Training is due to start in February. Work is also underway in Equality Impact Assessments (EIAs) to assess current level of knowledge through training needs analysis, implementing a training programme and promoting Directorate experts. This is to ensure that staff are equipped to complete EIAs, particularly when considering changes to service delivery. This is logged as a concern on a Policy and Performance Communication Cell 3c's document and is being monitored through the Communication Cell methodology. These examples demonstrate that Communication Cell actions result in activity by Policy and Performance not only internally but across all directorates.

3.5.7. Over the next 6 months Policy and Performance will continue working on the initiatives and activities outlined above, the majority of which are cross directorate and benefit the wider RBWM. There will also be more proactive work to support schools to reduce unpredictable ad hoc demands. The Policy and Performance lean representative recently attended a problem solving course organised by the lean academy, and will be using it to assist areas within Policy and Performance take their problem solving to the next level. 3c's are used extensively; however we want explore using the RBWM shield more which will result in better outcomes for the more significant concerns raised. This in turn will have the knock on effect of improving the lean experience for staff on the ground, as they see and take part in improvements taking shape within their areas.

### 3.6. **Adult & Community Services Directorate**

3.6.1. Roll out of Communication Cells is nearly complete. Communication Cell suggestions from staff in libraries have led to pilots aiming to increase customer reservation fulfilment rates as it was suggested that shelf-check procedures, whereby items that have been reserved by customers are searched for by staff,

take place every hour by teams on the pods rather than assigned as a big job for someone to do less frequently.

- 3.6.2. Some Lean reviews in Adult Services had been completed and were in the implementation phase with some issues. Transformation within Adult Services had identified the need to change core management IT systems in the course of the Lean analysis in 2010 in the Short Term and Rehabilitation service.
- 3.6.3. The implementation of self-service in the Libraries Arts and Heritage Service, for taking out and return of books secured efficiencies by reducing time-consuming manual processes and enhanced customer satisfaction. The benefit for residents is that they are now able to choose to use a much quicker self-service option if they wish to, which also offers greater privacy. Many other processes have also been streamlined, such as AV security, as a result of the implementation of RFID self-service. Instead of a customer having to approach a member of staff who would then look for the CD / DVD for them from a large collection behind the counter, the DVDs / CDs are now housed in locked cases on the open shelves and customers unlock them themselves on the way out, reducing staff involvement and waiting time for the customer. Furthermore, it has been possible to make the process for customers collecting reservations self-service. Now the customer can go to the public-access reservation shelves, locate their book and issue it to themselves. As a result staff are freed up from working behind a counter to being available to assist customers who are looking for information, books or advice and guidance anywhere on the floor.

### **3.7. Actions to Encourage Cultural Transformation in Adult and Community Services**

- 3.7.1. Communication Cells are greatly boosting valuable information sharing during restructures, providing good feedback on impacts on Customers, and allowing opportunities for improvement ideas from frontline workers to be put into action.
- The performance areas on Communication Cells are now key performance monitoring posts, with staff at all levels aware of SADC targets with these split down into component parts in many areas for the first time (e.g. revenue generation targets for individual libraries).
  - Leisure Centres have simplified financial performance information and key indicators for all staff to see and engage with.
  - Frontline teams have been involved in setting their own targets to contribute to the overall service targets and these are being surpassed (e.g. attendees at outreach events).
  - Any variance from targets are noted and where necessary raised as concerns with causes and countermeasures put into place.
  - Communication is now more open and transferring quickly across the teams.
  - Staff can concentrate on small bites of information and have the ability to contribute more regularly.

- Frontline staff are now more empowered to make local decisions for improvements and savings, as well as providing input to higher level lean improvements.
- At ACS leadership group managers contributed to Directors Management Team 3C's and were encouraged to feed up concerns. A key theme was a concern about information on savings and restructures. This has resulted in DMT checking communication flows and ensuring heads of service have this as item in communications cells as well.
- Home carers being encouraged to make decisions themselves, where customers needing care appear to no longer need it.
- Adult Services have simplified the assessment forms for the Self Directed Support as a result of Communication Cell discussions with staff.
- Library CD's and DVD's; customers unlock them themselves on the way out rather than needing assistance from staff reducing customer waiting times.

### 3.8. Benefits being realised

#### 3.8.1. Below are examples of some of the benefits being realised

- In the Libraries, Arts and Heritage Service there has been wide range of examples of recent benefits from lean.
- Higher book borrowing targets led to a problem solving group being brought together from across teams, which identified a range of possible solutions and to improve these still further which are currently underway
- Frontline teams raised concerns at Communication Cell meetings about data protection and security. A small problem solving circle led to Screen Privacy filters put onto staff Pod PC monitors in public areas to eliminate the chance of customer details being visible to other customers, and security processes at cash tills were improved. Staff comments from this: "I really did feel that they'd all listened to me, at the comm. cell" (ideas raised as 3C were acted on). "Our daily Communication Cell meetings bring up issues we wouldn't have thought of"
- Time saving improvements to the way tasks are allocated within Maidenhead Library have led to more efficient working, necessary due to staff restructures
- Cost-saving suggestions being collected on Communication Cells and acted on (reduced leaflet printing/change in quality of paper/black and white rather than colour materials)
- Revenue generation ideas being collected on Communication Cells, investigated and acted on – for example suggestions on improving DVD loans were investigated and have resulted in increased DVD charges, which will lead to greater income from January
- Customer requests for care equipment used to be passed from one area to another within adult social care, with delays due to workloads and due to delivery times for the equipment. Frontline teams can now respond directly and

immediately to requests using a central store of equipment, which is topped up by orders later. This equipment can often enable customers to become self-sufficient again. This means customers get their needs met more quickly, and care visit costs are cut sooner.

- Information shared at adult care comm. cells led to staff being redeployed from the in-house care team to a new centre, ensuring valuable skills in dementia care were not lost as well as reducing the number staff losing their jobs. This information has also led to complex care packages being maintained with minimum impacts on customers throughout the changes
- Leisure Centre use of the 3c's has meant teams are identifying and taking responsibility for problems around the building which leads to quicker resolution. An example is that it has been used to improve telephone answering performance statistics. In addition toilet checking and cleaning was identified as being missed periodically but was addressed and improved through the Communication Cell.
- Using problem-solving circles, Leisure Centres have been focussing on income generators such as children's parties and shop income and are continuing to multi-skill teams to support ongoing cost savings.
- In addition Leisure Centre casual bookings for outdoor courts are now charged at the time of booking and not at the time of arrival, reducing waiting time and potential failure to pay on the date of the booking.

### 3.9. **Cutting across silos**

- A great example of cross-directorate working was the recent snow strategy meeting. Here home carers who have to get through to patients raised issues of roads affected more by snow than expected. It turned out that roads had been gritted but sweepers had come in afterwards. This has been reorganised to allow gritting to take full effect, leading not only to quicker, safer access to Customers by home carers, and every other Council service, but also to prevention of injury in Residents.
- In Libraries, regular checks on the scanning team for delays have allowed more accurate stock budget monitoring.
- Leisure Centres are creating activity days for schools, and vouchers for children's services, leading to greater engagement and increased attendances.
- Leisure Centres have also been working with the Parking team to reduce problems, with ticketing particularly with disabled groups, reducing red tape and waste
- The Supporting People unit was merged with the Joint Commissioning unit in Adult Services in December 2010 to produce team and outcome efficiencies in the work with partners and providers across supported accommodation and adult social care.

### 3.10. **Financial savings as a result of lean**

- Libraries stabilised their printing budget through Communication Cell communication and ideas generated at Communication Cells. The regular monthly spend of £300 was reduced to £100 by switching to black and white leaflets, and using colour only for posters. The idea of changing admission tickets to events at libraries from including a glass of wine to separating the admission and charging for wine at library events was raised at a Communication Cell by a team member, this initiative was introduced.
- Lean reviews in Adult Social care are contributing towards restructure savings. Actual savings on care visits from lean improvements are being monitored.
- Leisure Services – Lean Principles underpinned the recent reviews of team structure in Cemeteries, Leisure Centres Management and Landscape Design where 5 posts in total have been removed.

## 4. **Plans for the next 6 months**

### 4.1. **Libraries, Arts & Heritage Services**

- Libraries will be working on our book stock supply chain from customer pull (request) to customer fulfilment. This will include work underway to implement EDI with suppliers, which will also streamline systems in place to update the financial systems
- Aiming to improve problem-solving breakouts from 3Cs raised on their Communication Cells. Communication Cell managers have attended recent problem solving training and all staff will be given guidance on running problem solving circles or when problems are small enough to more efficiently be tackled there and then at a Communication Cell meeting. Communication Cell performance areas are also being reviewed to more clearly display targets – and whether targets being met or not, using standard symbols and colours

### 4.2. **Adult Services**

- Adult social care Lean reviews are being implemented, with improved IT support still an outstanding issue, for example to improve scheduling of care visit improvements. Plans are in place to develop great improvements to the IT management systems (PARIS, and CM2000) for care management, rehabilitation, and care brokerage units. Recent internal lean review meetings in adult social care are also bringing up extra ideas for future improvements.
- The Adult Services care management staffing review across learning disability and disabilities teams is complete, and proposals are now being subject to approval and consultation process with significant efficiencies planned to remove 10% managed vacancy factor and other factors.

#### **4.3. Leisure Services**

- Plans to host an annual centre full team communication cell at the centres to which all teams are invited. The Communication Cell approach will also be used as part of Quest accreditation.
- Following a review of the Outdoor Facilities Team and staffing reduction in December 2010 the central leisure services admin team has been utilized to provide administration services.
- After reviewing the admin functions at the Magnet Leisure Centre staffing was reduced and in December 2010 the central leisure services admin team are being utilised to provide cover admin services.

#### **5. Conclusion**

The last report to members was in October 2010, so the advances demonstrated throughout this report represent the last three months. It is clear that Lean is 'sweeping' through the organisation and returning good results. Services are moving at different speeds that reflect the organic nature of cultural change. However, the Lean academy continues to ensure that a strong framework of support is provided to ensure consistency in approach and also to provide a source of knowledge, support and advice. There are areas of excellent practice that the Council can be proud of and will act as an impressive showcase to other organisations who may be interested in following the RBWM way.

6. Appendix – An example of the internal newsletter, 'Lean Forward: December 2010 Edition'

# Lean Forward

## E-Bulletin

December 2010



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### Welcome

 Welcome to the December edition of Lean Forward. This month we have some guidance on sending communications via the communication cells, an overview of a technique called '5s' that helps team to remove clutter and maintain an organised workplace – ideal for a new year's resolution....

We also feedback on a recent review that looked at the Customer Service Centre (CSC) and some of the many services it provides.

We hope you find this of interest and if you would like to advertise what is happening in your area with Lean, feel free to send your stories to - [Lean.practitioners@rbwm.gov.uk](mailto:Lean.practitioners@rbwm.gov.uk). In the meantime, have a very merry Christmas and Happy New Year. The Lean Academy.

### Communication Success!

 Since they were introduced six months ago, 96% of the identified communication cells have now been set up across the authority. Only 5 of 135 are yet to be set up – well done to everyone concerned!

They are starting to become part of RBWM's culture and teams are telling us about the benefits they have found from having communication cells such as cutting down on meeting times and having a platform for stressing concerns they have had for a while.

Thank you to all those who have and are continuing to help us record any updates and, as ever, we can help

### Communications

 Comm cells are an excellent way of communicating with the rest of the authority.

The Lean Academy are happy to send any of your communications out to Comm Cell owners for you. If you would like us to do this please follow the guidance below.

The communication should be:

- an attachment to an email e.g. a word document.
- No more than 2 A4 pages long.
- Relevant to the whole authority or Directorate.

If you would like to send out a communication please send your attachments to [Lean.Practitioner@rbwm.gov.uk](mailto:Lean.Practitioner@rbwm.gov.uk)

They will be sent out on the Friday of the week they are received in the practitioner inbox. Please bear this in mind if you require your information to be sent out by a particular date.

If you do not have an attachment to send us you can fill out the communication template which is on Hyperwave. Please fill out all sections and attach it to your email. You can find this form by selecting Lean Academy from the quick links in Hyperwave and then selecting communication cells, you will then see the form named communication.

When sending your details to us please add a short piece of text that you would like to go out with the attachment and confirm the named contact for any queries to be directed to.



## 7. OPTIONS AVAILABLE AND RISK ASSESSMENT

### 7.1. Options

	Option	Comments	Financial Implications
1.	N/A		
2.	N/A		

## 8. CONSULTATIONS CARRIED OUT

8.1. Not applicable.

## 9. COMMENTS FROM THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL

9.1. To be added

## 10. IMPLICATIONS

10.1. The following implications have been addressed where indicated below.

Financial	Legal	Human Rights Act	Planning	Sustainable Development	Diversity & Equality
N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

Background Papers: