

**BUSINESS PLAN FOR LEGAL SERVICES (THE PRACTICE)
2017/18**

Service Leads			
Head of Practice	Tom Lewis		
	Cambridge City Council	Huntingdonshire District Council	South Cambridgeshire District Council
Director	David Edwards	Anthony Kemp	Mike Hill
Lead Councillor	Cllr Herbert	Cllr Brown	Cllr Topping

APPROVED BY	Status	Date
Management Board	Draft	20/01/17
Shared Services Partnership Board	Draft	26/01/17
Joint Advisory Committee	Final draft	31/01/17
Cambridge City Council [<i>Executive Councillor and Scrutiny Committee</i>]	Final	
Huntingdonshire District Council Cabinet	Final	
South Cambridgeshire District Council Cabinet	Final	

INTRODUCTION

The Legal Shared Service known as the Practice went live in October 2015. The service has moved out of the transition stage and has moved from 3 distinct and separate units to a true shared service.

The rationale for the establishment of a shared legal service between CCC, SCDC and HDC is that it will enable a reduction in the externalisation of legal work through the broader sharing of legal capability, increase output from lawyers by managing non-lawyer work away from them, create a single point for commissioning legal services to improve value for money from the process of externalising legal work, increase the opportunity for income generation by offering legal services to public and voluntary sector bodies, and improve staff recruitment, retention and development.

Tom Lewis was appointed as Head of Practice and all Principal Lawyer positions have been successfully recruited to. A review of the remaining tiers has been carried out and implemented. This will led to reduced external legal spend with work which would previously have been outscoured been taken back

inhouse.

A copy of the full structure with positions filled is detailed below.

The Practice has responded to demands across the 3 Councils' and has provided legal support in a number of projects including:

- In relation to the establishment of a Combined Authority following the decisions by all three councils to endorse the Devolution deal, the 3C Legal Shared services has provided legal support to all 3 authorities at briefings, full meetings of council and in the officer led working groups set up following Council ratifications.
- The Practice has provided support in relation to the Public Spaces Protection Order put in place to protect areas of the Town Centre from punt touting.
- Huntingdonshire District Council (HDC) and Huntingdonshire Town Council (HTC) have been in long negotiations in respect of the transfer of the Dryside site of One Leisure Huntingdon and the Medway Centre. The Practice has provided necessary legal support.
- Ongoing support has been provided to South Cambridgeshire Disitric Council ("SCDC") in relation to the loan agreement to facilitate the proposed new Cambridge Ice Rink.

3C Reporting timetable

Progress reports on Business Plan implementation and progress against key measures will be quarterly at the 3C Management Board meetings and then submitted quarterly to the 3C Chief Executives' Board. Quarterly performance reports will be submitted to the Joint Shared Service Group (Leaders) prior to consideration by each partner at executive and scrutiny level.

Quartely performance reports will be produced to report on performance against key performanace indicators agreed in the business plans, budget position and wider benefits.

An annual report on the progress of shared services will be produced and presented at the relevant committees of partner authorities in the June/July cycle.

Version FINAL

Date 16/02/17

A. PURPOSE OF THIS DOCUMENT

This is the proposed Business Plan for the Practice, part of 3C Shared Services, for 2017/18. It describes how the shared service arrangement outlined in the approved Business Case proposes to be delivered, to ensure objectives are achieved and business benefits are realised within a robust governance framework and in the context of the partner councils' corporate plans.

The following objectives have been agreed:

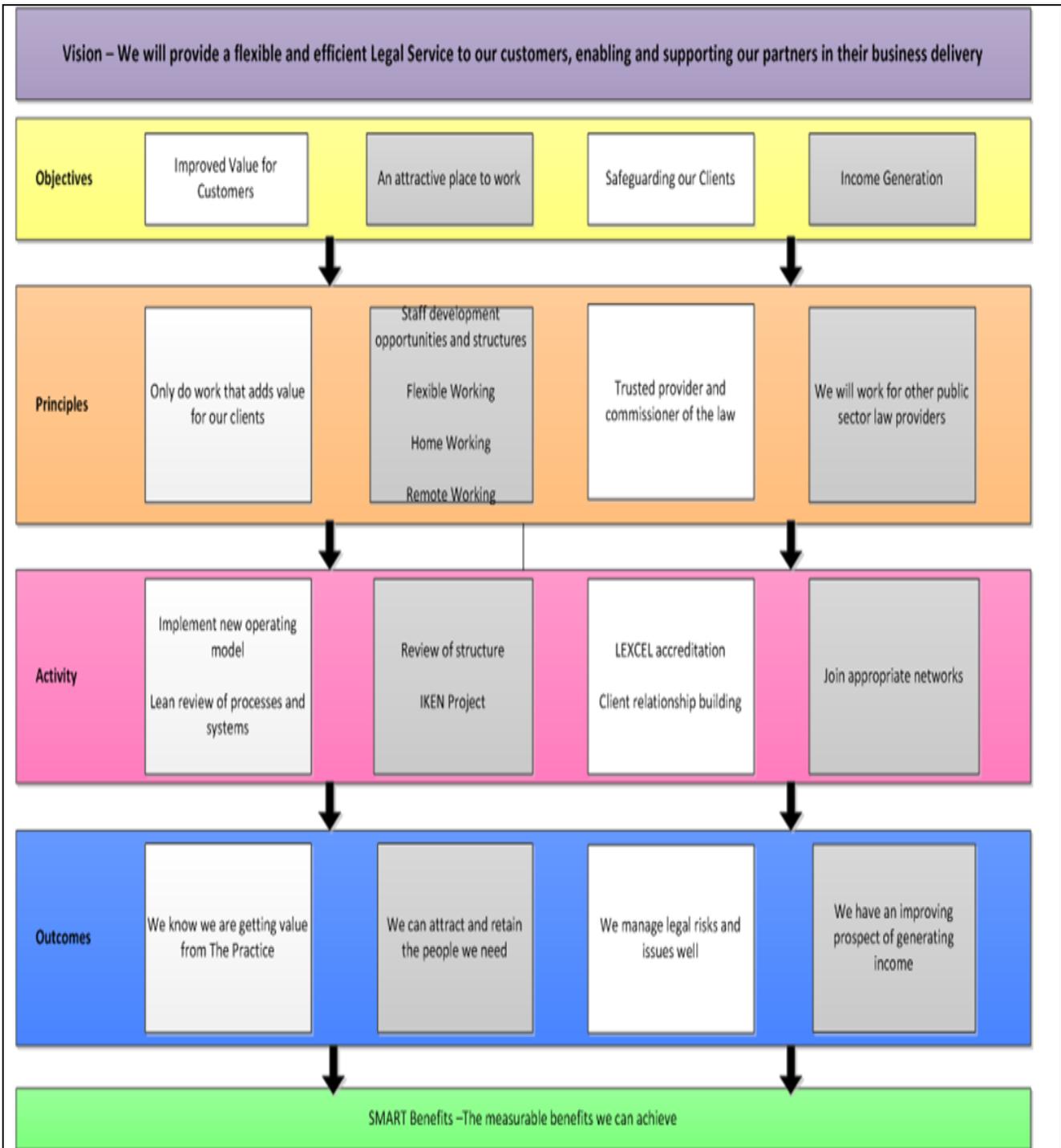
- Protection of services which support the delivery of the wider policy objectives of each Council
- Creation of services that are genuinely shared between the relevant councils with those councils sharing the risks and benefits whilst having in place a robust model to control the operation and direction of the service
- Savings through reduced managements costs and economies of scale
- Increased resilience and retention of staff
- Minimise the bureaucracy involved in operating the shared service
- Opportunities to generate additional income, where appropriate
- Procurement and purchasing efficiencies
- Sharing of specialist roles which individually, are not viable in the long-term

The Plan is divided into the following sections:

- Section 1: Context and Overview
- Section 2: Operational Plan (business as usual activities)
- Section 3: Development Plan (service improvement & project based activities)
- Section 4: Summary of Performance Indicators

B. DESCRIPTION OF THE SERVICE

Vision for the Practice



This business plan will form part of ensuring that the Practice becomes a true shared service and that the benefits are realised.

Description of The Practice

The Practice carries out legal work for the 3 Councils covering all areas and types of work in which the Councils are involved including general legal advice, drafting documents and representing the Council in court.

The Practice is committed to providing an excellent legal service to assist the Councils in meeting its objectives and to ensure that the individual Councils act within the law.

Objectives

Referring to the Business Case, the focus for the Practice remains the same as stated in the Business Case approved by all three Councils: A high standard of leadership, whereby the senior management team possess the right range of managerial, commercial, innovation and change management skills necessary to deliver the new service:

- Align current capacity with demand from within the practice itself
- Reduce external spend
- Optimise effective use of legal skills
- Continual reduction of the books and publications spend
- Client departments to have a major role in developing the Business Plan
- Quarterly reporting of KPIs identified by the new management team of the Practice
- Income generation is key to the success of the Practice, and should derive income from legal costs incurred or recovered in a legal activity
- To utilise the recording and case management system

Stakeholders and Partners

The client services from the 3 partner councils are identified as key stakeholders and with the introduction of an Intelligent Client role they have a means of conveying their requests, consumption and issues resolution.

C. FINANCIAL OVERVIEW

The Business case is based on:

- A Practice budget of £1.3m
- Better commissioning of external legal advice
- The re-structure will see efficiencies in management and business support arrangements (latter being driven by the extended use of technical support via IKEN, together with better processes)

The table below is an illustration of the reduction in net budget as a result of the proposed savings targets for 2016/17

The Practice Budgets (excluding recharges / overheads)

	Year 0*	Current Budget	Forecast		
	2015/16 £	2016/17 £	2017/18 £		
Gross Budget	1,444,070	1,377,440	1,343,920		
Less Income	250,710	257,010	194,550		
Net Budget	1,193,680	1,120,430	1,149,370		

*For comparison purposes the Year 0 budget is for the 12 month period from Apr 15 to Mar 16.

2017/18 budget shared by Council in proportion to 2015/16 gross budget contribution and reflects additional £60k contribution from HDC

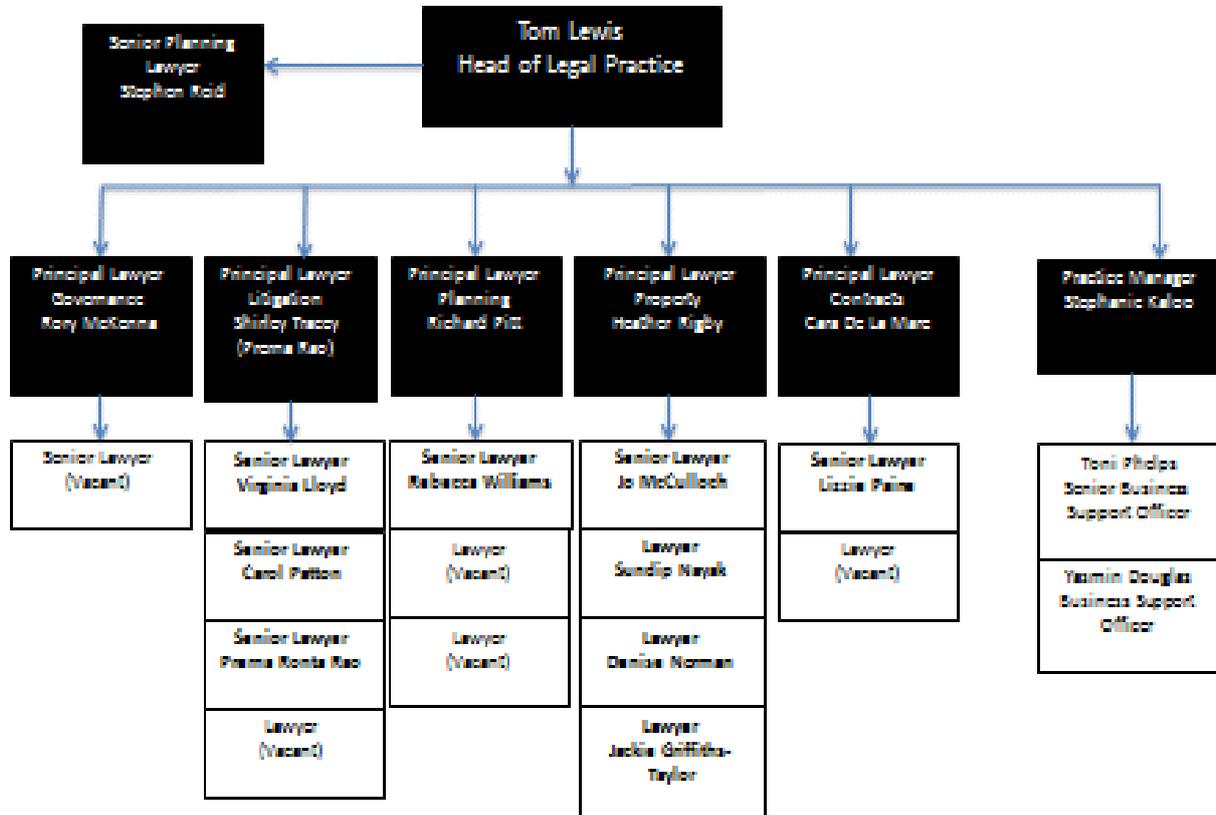
57.21%	14.05%	28.74%	
CCC £	HDC £	SCDC £	Total £
623,230	213,060	313,080	1,149,370

D. STAFFING OVERVIEW

Tom Lewis was appointed as Head of Practice in August 2016 and has a positive impact on shaping the Practice. All Principal Lawyer positions have also now been successfully recruited to with Rory McKenna as Principal Lawyer (Governance) and Richard Pitt as Principal Lawyer for Planning. In support of these roles new appointments have been made for a Senior Planning Lawyer and a Senior Contracts Lawyer. The Practice is therefore far better placed to deliver improved performance.

A restructure of the remaining tiers was carried out during 2016/17 and is now fully implemented.

A copy of the existing structure chart ;



E. LOOKING BACK

Achievements

1. The Practice now operates a uniform case management and time recording system, so time can be captured by all fee-earners.
2. Recharging model based on consumption designed
3. Portfolio of templates now in place for procurement and contracts to create a more efficient process
4. Code of Conduct matters across the Practice are now in hand and being operated in line with the Constituent Authorities constitutional arrangements and local practices.

F. LOOKING FORWARD

The Practice plans to increase its efficiency and effectiveness to its three partner Councils by utilising the Intelligent Client role as a means of conveying their requests, consumption and issues resolution.

With the Practice now moving towards a situation where it is fully staffed, staff restructures completed, a time recording system now in place the Practice is now in a position to operate in a more steady state and concentrate its effort on client management through introducing consumption based recharging model and providing a clearer picture of demand and consumption of partners authorities.

With the introduction of standard case management system and time recording system the aim is to get people working more flexibly through home working, remote working and the use of regional hubs. The move to a main office with two hubs has implemented the corporate desk strategies of a ratio 7:10 and this makes flexible working an increased priority:

The Practice has identified the following potential work streams which will impact upon 2 or more of the Councils' this year :

- Devolution
- City Deal
- Major growth sites and associated legal agreements
- Elections
- Joint Procurements

The Practice will also be looking to engage with key clients over their forthcoming priorities and objectives and will use this as a basis to enable the Practice to anticipate and enable any necessary training.

G. COMMUNICATION AND CONSULTATION

On-going dialogue will continue with Client departments and the Practice has set up an Intelligent Client role to liaise with individual partner's authority's needs, consumption rates and issues.

The Practice aims to continually improve client relationships by empowering clients with know-how, to

enable them to carry out work previously undertaken by the practice. A key objective to within the shared services practice is to streamline the processes, and encourage a more efficient process with regards to contracts. This has been done within procurement and a portfolio of templates to be used by the three teams has now been produced. An s.106 agreed template is currently in the pipeline for both South Cambridgeshire District Council and Cambridge City Council.

The Practice will be carrying out a customer satisfaction survey in the coming months to assist in understanding client need. The survey will capture what we do well and what could be done better. This will be feedback to the team and used by Principal Solicitors' to improve their service areas.

SECTION TWO – OPERATIONAL PLAN 2017/18

This Section sets out the “Business as Usual” priorities and the activities that *3C Shared Legal Services* will undertake to deliver value-adding services to customers.

	Priorities for the service	State where these priorities are outlined <i>(i.e. Corporate plans, ICT strategy)</i>	Actions that will deliver the priority	Outputs from the activity	Outcomes from the activity	Lead Officer
1	To implement a consumption lead recharging model Integrate a single fees charging mechanism and charge out rate for the fee earners	3C Management Board Business plan and client departments	Use of coding with iKen time recording system	Quarterly consumption report for partner authorities Standard rates per hours for Legal advice Make a comparison of fees and charges and look at updating these to have a single fees and charges model	Ability for partner authorities to identify areas for reduction in legal spend Ability to benchmark charges Uniform fees and charges Better budget management	TL
2	Review what work is outsourced at the moment and make and review if it could be carried out in-house where possible	Initial business case agreed at July 2015 S&R Committee	Analysis of external spend and review of capability and capacity within the Practice	Reduce the legal spend of the practice	A reduction in the cost of out-sourced work More work being carried out in-house	TL

3	Achieve Lexcel accreditation	Initial business case agreed at July 2015 S&R Committee	Review of processes against standard	<p>Audit of current practices</p> <p>Standardisation of processes and documentation</p>	Lexcel accreditation carried out and gained	TL/SK
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Priority	Performance Measures <i>(provide a list only - target information is included in section 4)</i>	Dependencies (ICT, Finance, Human Resources, accommodation etc)	Key risks to delivery <i>(include how these will be mitigated)</i>
1	Staff productivity To assess the output from legal officers	ICT system Use of iKen case management system	ICT system not working - Mitigated by highlighting issues through the Management Board for escalation Staff are not recording their time correctly - The Business Manager will be providing regular reports to the Head of Practice and immediate correctional action can be taken
2	Customer service- - Returning telephone calls - Acknowledge correspondence - Agree operational requirements on receipt of full instruction - Report on progress of case work	ICT system Use of iKen case management system	ICT system not working - Mitigated by highlighting issues through the Management Board for escalation
3	Cost effectiveness - To reflect the quality of financial management	Finance ICT	The Practice does not deliver stated savings - The budget will be monitored monthly and reported to the 3C Management Board for reporting or action
4.	Case Disputes Resolves in 3C Favour - Measure of percentage of disputes awarding in favour of 3C on the advice of the service not to settle	ICT system Use of iKen case management system	The Practice not settling cases before actions - Head of Practice to authorise all actions

SECTION 3: 2016/17 SERVICE DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITIES

Development objective	Lexcel Accreditation	Describe the desired outcome – what will it look like when it has been achieved?	A management accreditation recognised and run by the Law Society	Lead officer	Tom Lewis – Head of Practice
Is this a Project?	This is a project which has already commenced and is due for completion by September 2017				
Business Benefits			How will it be measured?		
<u>Standardised Procedure</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Integrating the historic teams to become one - Easier to influence historical cultural differences - More clarity for client services on points of contact - 			Feedback from staff to be sought through consultation Customer and staff satisfaction will be measured by way of regular feedback forms and meetings.		
<u>Meet Lexcel required standard in seven different areas</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Structure and strategy - Financial management - Information management - People management - Risk management - Client care - File and case management. 			Assessed by Lexcel accreditor		
Outputs & products		Resources	Responsible Officer		Target delivery date
Lexcel standard operation model Lexcel accreditation		Tom Lewis – Sponsor Stephanie Kaloo – Project Manager Richard Wesbroom – Finance	Tom Lewis		September 2017
Key risks		Capacity to deliver on time			



SECTION 4 – KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS (KPIs)

KPI Reference and Description	Reporting frequency	2016/17 Target	2016/17 Final Outturn	2017/18 Target	2017/18 Year End Estimate
Key Service PIs <i>(to be selected from the action plan at section 2A)</i>					
Staff productivity - 20 fee-earning staff to record 1,200 hours per annum	Quarterly to Boards	n/a	n/a	1,200 hr per annum	TBC
Cost effectiveness - Measure achievement of 15% saving from baseline budget as set out in business case	Quarterly to Boards	£179K	£124k	£179k	TBC
Case Disputes Resolves in 3C Favour - Measure of percentage of disputes awarding in favour of 3C	Quarterly to Boards	n/a	n/a	75%	TBC
Customer Satisfaction Levels	Quarterly to Boards			90% satisfaction	TBC