

CABINET

13 December 2006

REPORT OF:

Chief Executive

Contact Officer: Kate Robertson, Acting
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Agenda - Part: 1	Item: 11
Subject: Our Enfield Magazine	
Wards: All	
Cabinet Member consulted: Cllr Zinkin	

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report seeks Cabinet approval for the creation of a new residents magazine (key decision 2090). The magazine will be called Our Enfield, produced bi-monthly and distributed to all homes in the Borough. It will be funded through a combination of existing publication budgets and advertising income.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that Cabinet approve the production of the magazine and relevant budgets are captured to support its costs.

3. BACKGROUND

The Council is striving to further increase resident satisfaction with the authority and its services. Satisfaction with Council services continues to improve, reflecting the many improvements that have been made.

However, satisfaction with the Council overall has not increased to the same degree. Research from Ipsos MORI has confirmed a clear link between resident satisfaction and how informed people feel about their local council, its services and the reasons behind its decisions.

Whilst there have been improvements, residents surveys have shown that local people do not feel that the Council keeps them adequately informed. Further consultation with residents has shown that they want information delivered to them, they want to know more about council services and how to access them and they want to be kept up-to-date with developments, reasons behind key decisions and how to get involved.

Producing a resident magazine reflects residents' preference for information direct to their homes but in a more effective way than producing a series of separate leaflets. Most other councils produce a magazine and have seen improvements in satisfaction as a result.

During specific focus groups with citizen panel members, there was broad support for a council magazine. Possible names, layout, regularity and content were discussed as well as how it should be funded. It was agreed that it should be supported by advertising but not to the extent that there was little real content.

Following this feedback, it is proposed that the magazine is called 'Our Enfield' and produced bi-monthly. This means we can keep residents up-to-date whilst maintaining a positive relationship with local newspapers as we will need to continue advertising public notices, jobs and other time-specific events.

The Council has a framework of approved design and print suppliers following a tendering exercise led by Corporate Procurement. Quotes were sought for the design, print and distribution of the magazine from suppliers on the framework list. A local company has been selected for the first issue, with the total cost being £21,185.

It has been agreed that a number of publications currently produced – including the best value performance plan summary, the six month update booklet, summer activities brochure and other publications should be published through the magazine. Therefore, the budgets allocated for these publications will be captured to contribute to the cost of the magazine. The remaining costs would be met through advertising.

6. COMMENTS OF THE DIRECTOR OF FINANCE AND CORPORATE RESOURCES AND OTHER DEPARTMENTS

6.1 Financial Implications

The costs and associated sources of funding for the proposals contained within this report are:

	2006-2007 £'000	FYE £'000
Cost to produce magazine	47	131
Funded by:		
Existing Communications budget	(15)	(25)
Existing Best Value budget	(27)	(27)
Existing Leisure Services budget	-	(3)
Advertising Income	(5)	(76)
Total Funding	(47)	(131)

The advertising income target is reasonably challenging in a full year and there is an expectation that council services who currently advertise externally or produce publications would use the magazine and contribute towards this target.

6.2 Legal Implications

- 6.2.1 Section 2 of the Local Government Act 2000, permits the Council to do anything to help achieve the promotion or improvement of the economic/social/environmental wellbeing of the London Borough of Enfield. However, in raising revenue via advertising revenue the Council has a duty to ensure that, taking one year with

another, the income from charges for the service does not exceed the costs of provision. Therefore as the report states the revenue will be used to help fund the magazine.

- 6.2.2 Section 142 of the Local Government Act 1972 gives the Council the general power to make arrangements where the public may obtain information on services and other related functions of the Council. However, the Council must comply with section 2 of the Local Government Act 1986 which expressly prohibits the publication by the Council of any material which in whole or in part appears to have been designed to affect public support for a political party.
- 6.2.3 If the Council allows businesses to advertise in the magazine, the Council must not be seen to be recommending or supporting any particular business. This needs to be clear in the magazine. Therefore, it is important to have a clear and robust process for reviewing the suitability of an advert, i.e. to ensure its not of a politically biased nature, or obscene, etc.
- 6.2.4 Overall the publicity must be relevant to the functions of the authority, objective and it should not duplicate unnecessarily publicity produced by other authorities.
- 6.2.5 A contract in a form approved by the Borough Solicitor will be required.
- 6.2.6 Under the Councils Constitution, in particular Contract Procedure Rules, the Council is permitted to "call-off" contracts via framework agreements as long as the call off arrangements defined in the framework contract are followed.

6.3 Performance management implications

The Council will need to ensure it meets the Audit Commission timescales for publishing a summary of its best value performance plan.

6.4 Property implications

None

7. PUTTING ENFIELD FIRST

Aim 5 – supporting the delivery of excellent services

Background Papers

None