



Future Shape Questions

Introduction

The trade unions are committed to participating in a fair, rigorous and comprehensive options appraisal process. The following questions should be addressed in all options appraisals. The questions in the sections on Evidence-based policy and the Evaluation process are intended to contribute to the thoroughness of the process.

Options appraisal

1. What work is being undertaken in developing the scope and content of an in-house option that is progressive and innovative ('business as usual' and 'doing nothing' are not viable options)?
2. How will each option contribute to the integration of public services in Barnet?
3. How will the appraisal process draw on evidence and lessons learnt from experience elsewhere?
4. How will the data on current operating, management, administrative and overhead costs be verified?
5. How is an in-house option (a service delivered by Council staff) being resourced and developed?
6. What are the full transaction costs (consultants, legal advice, advisers, officer time, contract monitoring and management) for implementing each option?
7. How will each option achieve efficiency savings and implement budget cuts?
8. What criteria and weighting will be used to assess the effect of each option on value for money, citizens, other Council services, staff and the local economy?
9. How have staff and trade unions been involved and consulted in the selection and appraisal of options?

Citizens

1. How will changes in the management of the service affect service users?
2. How will the views of services users and community organisations be taken into account in the options appraisal process?

Democratic governance

1. How will different types of service providers be held accountable to the Council?
2. What are the differences between the options in terms of their ability to ensure implementation of Council corporate policies and priorities?

Opportunities for innovation

1. How will staff be engaged in discussions on how innovative approaches can be used to improve services and identify more efficient and effective working?
2. How will the Council ensure that the information and communications system/software adopted for the project is viable, fit for purpose and sustainable?

Sustainability

1. What are the key concerns about the longer-term sustainability of each option?
2. What work has been carried out to look at cross working with other local authorities to provide services?

Employment

1. How have secondment and TUPE Plus transfer models been addressed in options appraisal?
2. How will each option ensure that transferred and new staff are able to remain in the Local Government Pension Scheme?
3. How will staff be involved in the development and appraisal of service delivery models?
4. How will each option develop and implement workforce development policies?

Risks

1. How will risks and counter measures in the project risk register be assessed if they cannot readily be quantified and how will this be shared with elected members and trade unions?
2. What are the critical factors that will be used in the sensitivity analysis?

Statutory duties

1. What are the core competencies of the service that should remain council functions?

Visits and case studies

1. How will options appraisal take account of evidence from local authorities that have successfully adopted different approaches to those selected by the Council for site visits?

Service specific

[\(add for each service\)](#)

Evidence-based policy

1. Are the findings and conclusions supported by evidence?
2. Are the evidence sources credible, rigorous and independent and not simply targets, forecasts or predicted outcomes?
3. What is the evidence and experience of implementation of the same or similar options?
4. Does the evidence relate to similar conditions that exist in Barnet?
5. What are the limitations of the evidence – what remains unknown or unclear?
6. Has the evidence been interpreted fairly?
7. Is there a need to obtain further information to corroborate the evidence?

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8. Does each option have a similar and comparable evidence base?
 9. Have all the operational, investment, staffing, managerial and governance needs of each option been investigated?
 10. Has the full range of transaction costs (including setting up and procurement costs, consultants' fees, client, contract management and monitoring costs) been identified and quantified?

Evaluation process

1. Are the forecasts of change in economic and social conditions from reliable sources?
2. Has the appraisal process been transparent?
3. Have the appraisal criteria been applied consistently for all the options?
4. Is the sample/methodology of user views and aspirations reliable and reflect the diversity of the population/service users and potential users.
5. Has the appraisal process considered fully the positive and negative impacts of each option?
6. Are the values and ideological perspectives of the options appraisal team recognised?
7. Are the assumptions and judgements made for each option transparent?
8. Have all the risks been identified and assessed?
9. Does the appraisal balance local needs and priorities with national policies and assess the impact on different groups/interests and the local economy?
10. Is the selection of a preferred option supported by evidence and assessments?
11. How sensitive is the preferred option to changes in forecasts, assumptions and judgements made in the course of the appraisal?

Sources

European Services Strategy Unit (2007) Options Appraisal Criteria and Matrix, Research Report No 2, June. www.european-services-strategy.org.uk/publications/essu-research-reports/essu-research-report-no-2-options-appraisal-cr/

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