Westminster City Council

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City of Westminster

Trading and sharing: Westminster's trading company and shared borough services

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Chief Executive

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Trading and Sharing – Why do it?

- To improve the quality and reduce the cost of services:
    - *you offer your residents and users*
    - *other councils offer their residents and users*
- Challenges services to be transparent about their true cost and tests they offer true value for money
- Challenges staff to think about how others provide the same services and share best practice

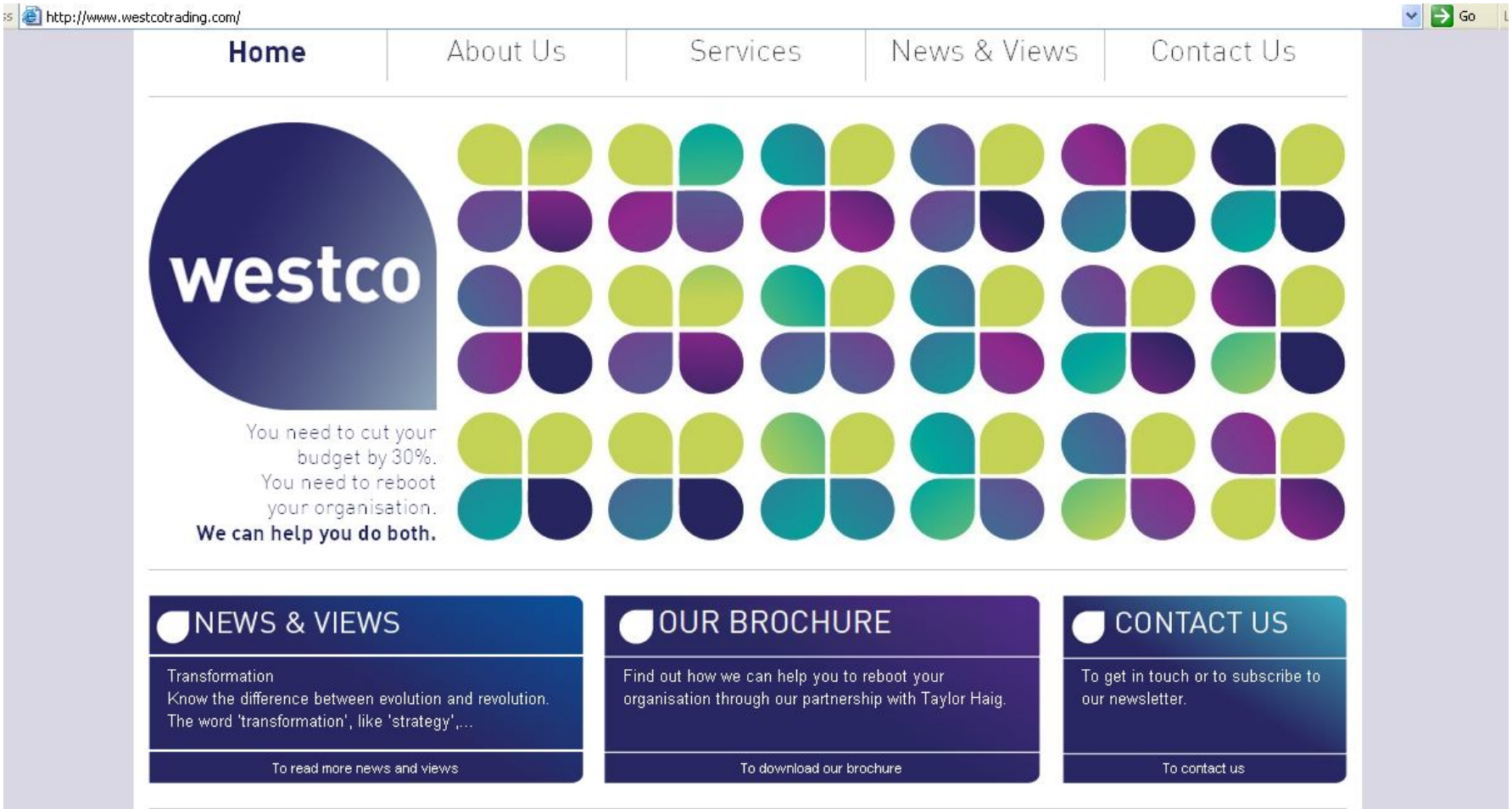
Trading or Sharing – Which to choose?

- Some services you can trade, others you can share, others you can do both
- Decide the most efficient route:
  - *Buy/sell – Simple financial transaction, quickly commission services needed, can be carried out for any authority*
  - *Sharing – More complex commitment on both sides, must be a similar interest/culture/customer base*
- Requires political leadership
- Have to ensure staff are commercially minded to trade, and receptive to new ideas to share
- In Westminster we trade and share services

Trading through Westco

- Westco Trading Limited is a company owned by the City of Westminster
- Established in 2008 to trade the very best of Westminster City Council services and skills with others in the public and private sector
- Operates under the trading powers introduced by the Local Government Act 2003
- Company governed by a board of directors chaired by the Cabinet Member for Finance and Resources and comprises senior council officers and an independent director
- Staff from Westminster City Council are seconded to Westco for the projects they undertake and capital costs are apportioned to Westco, in the same way a subsidiary of a commercial company would

Our website


http://www.westcotrading.com/
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westco
You need to cut your budget by 30%.
You need to reboot your organisation.
We can help you do both.
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The word 'transformation', like 'strategy',...
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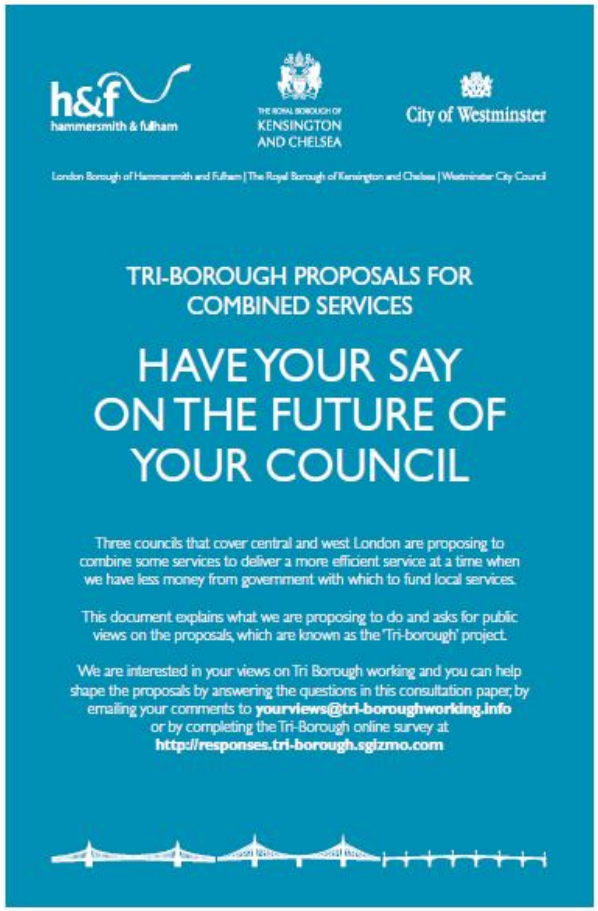
Our offer

- Our key skill is the ability to reduce costs and improve outputs
- Central to this are projects and advice to re-organise council functions to make them more efficient; essentially enabling public bodies to be better for less
- Focus has been communications, research and policy
- WCC staff are the comms teams in Sutton, Harrow and Richmond

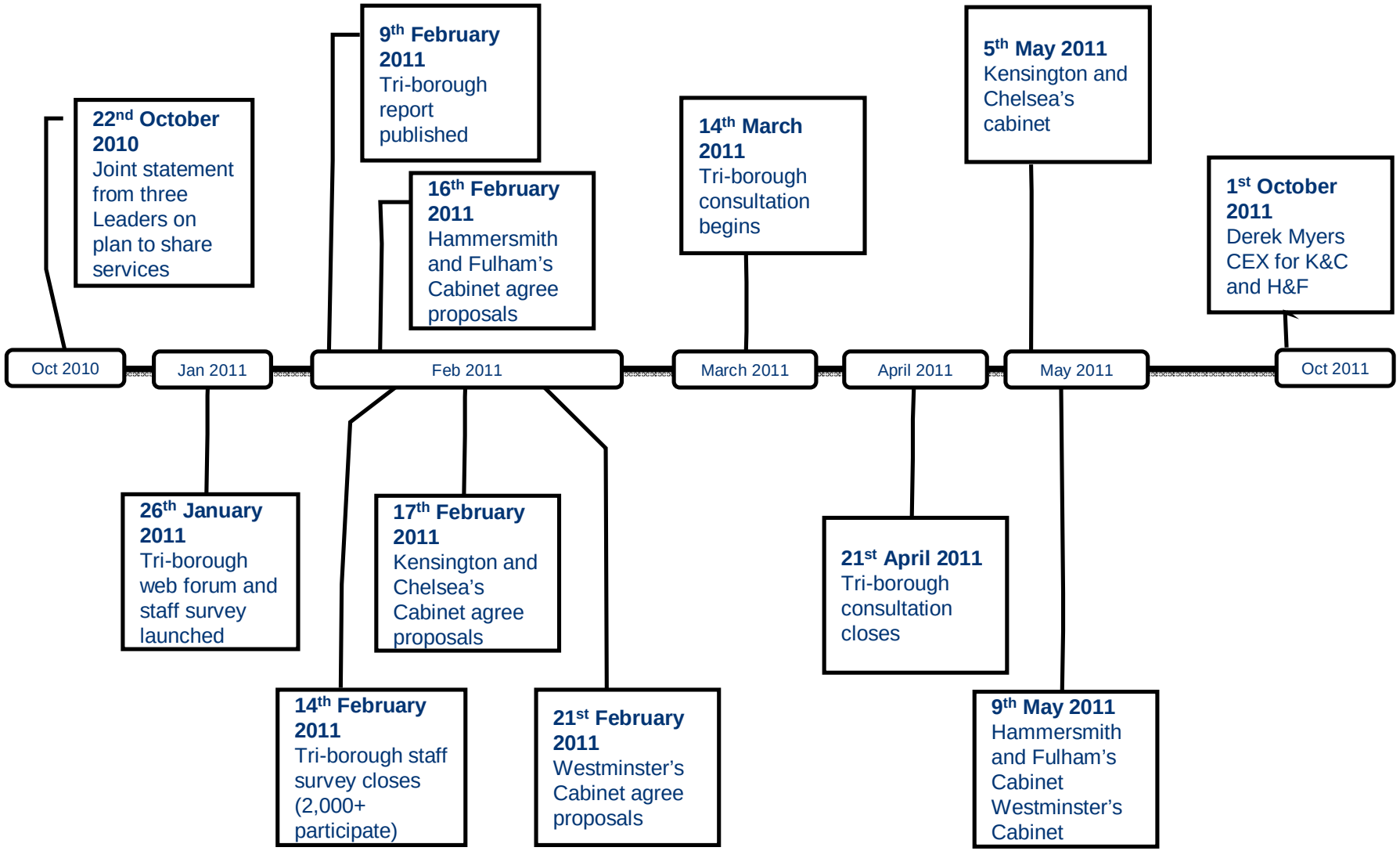
Tri-borough



Wordle via Attractor Consultancy website

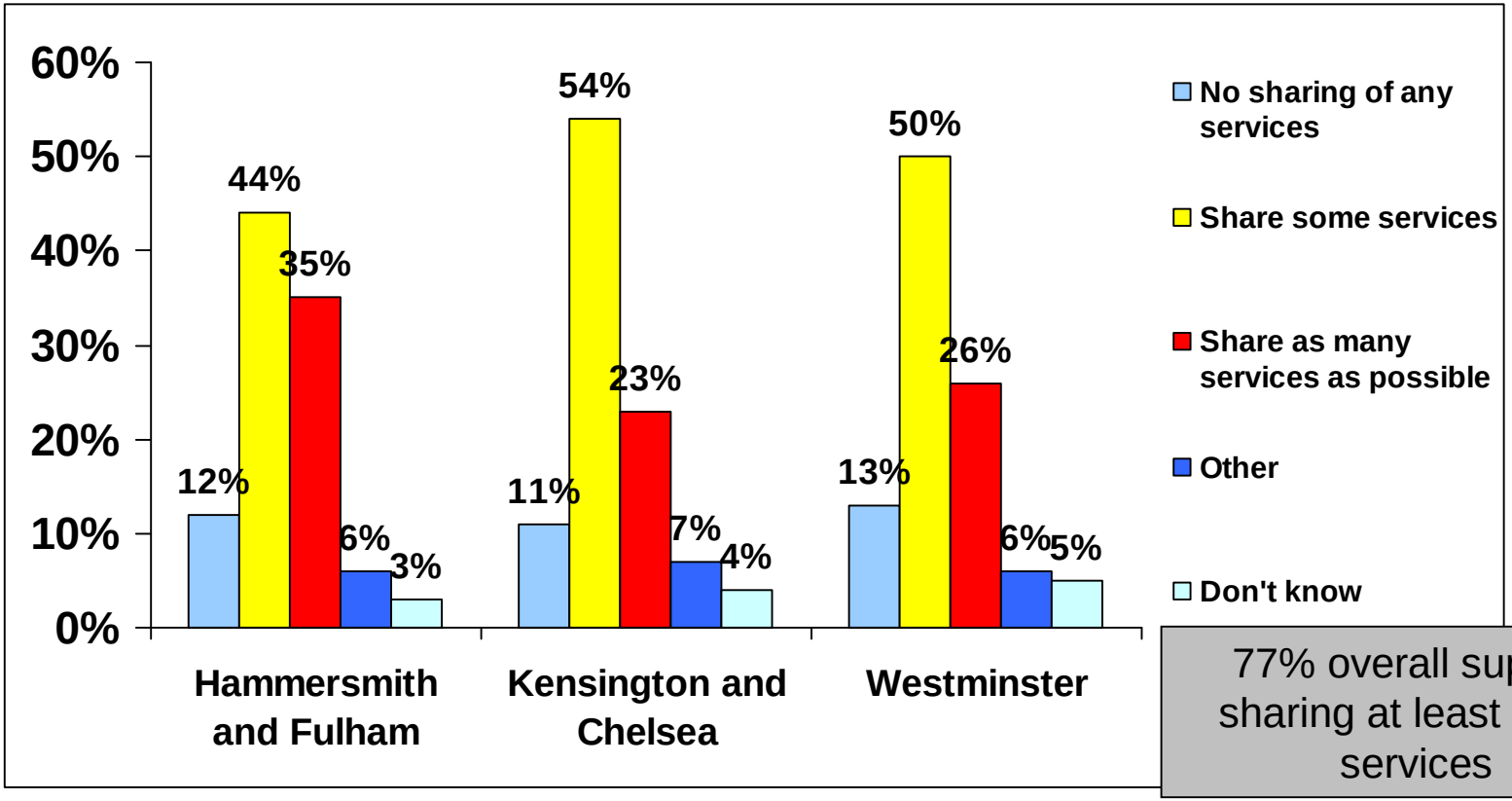
Why Tri-borough?

- To drive dramatic cost savings over time
- Similar cultures, history and objectives within the councils
- It makes sense as a geographical area
- Sets a challenge to all services to consider whether sharing is the most practical way to deliver services:
    - Children's, Adults, Libraries – Yes
    - Planning – No
    - Street cleaning, parking – Not yet
- Eventual aim is to maintain three separate democratic commissioning bodies – selecting services from the best providers
- Some shared services may therefore become mutuals or some other arrangement – staff will develop the best business model


Oct 2010
Jan 2011
Feb 2011
March 2011
April 2011
May 2011
Oct 2011
22nd October 2010 Joint statement from three Leaders on plan to share services
9th February 2011 Tri-borough report published
16th February 2011 Hammersmith and Fulham's Cabinet agree proposals
14th March 2011 Tri-borough consultation begins
5th May 2011 Kensington and Chelsea's cabinet
1st October 2011 Derek Myers CEX for K&C and H&F
26th January 2011 Tri-borough web forum and staff survey launched
17th February 2011 Kensington and Chelsea's Cabinet agree proposals
14th February 2011 Tri-borough staff survey closes (2,000+ participate)
21st February 2011 Westminster's Cabinet agree proposals
21st April 2011 Tri-borough consultation closes
9th May 2011 Hammersmith and Fulham's Cabinet Westminster's Cabinet

Opinion of sharing some council services - staff

Question 3: Thinking about the possible sharing of council services, which of the following statements comes closest to your views?

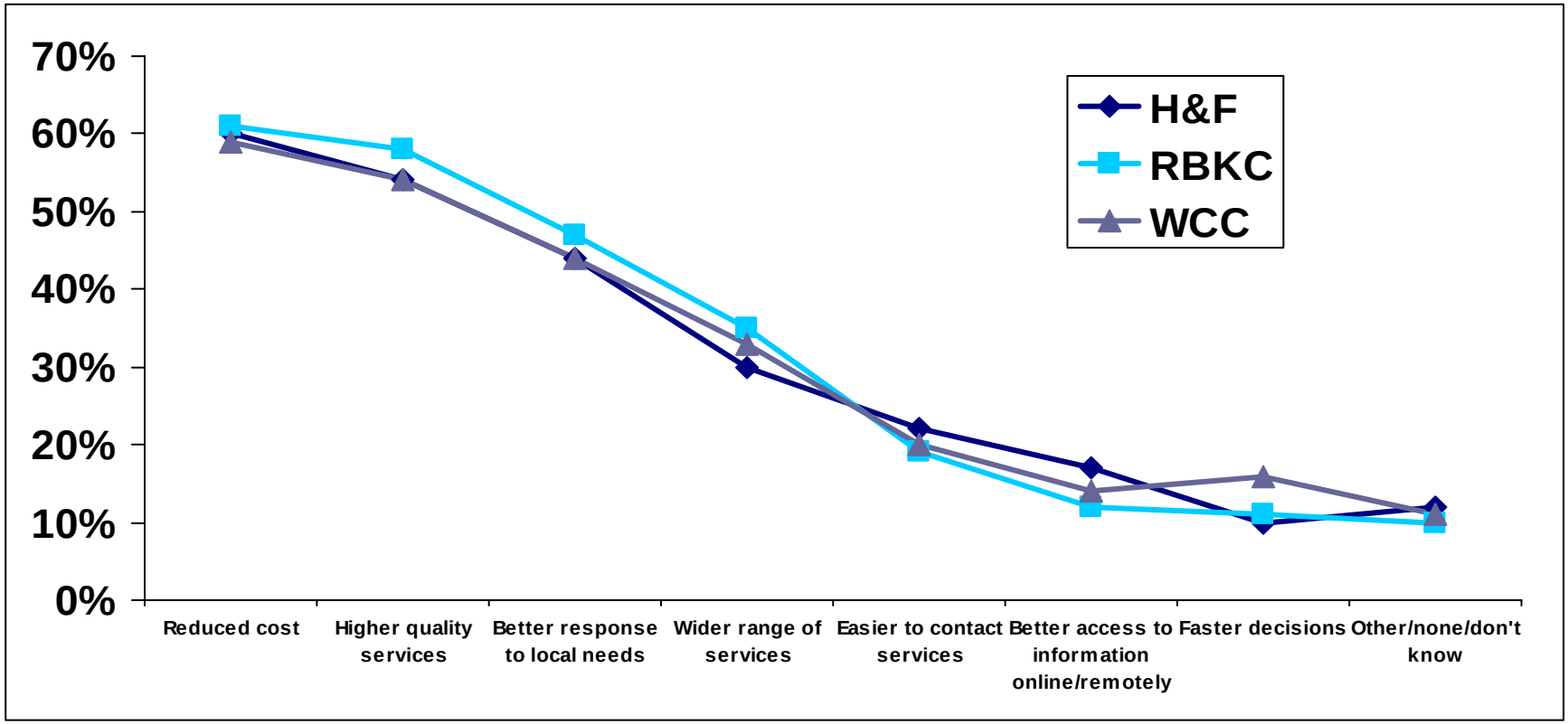


77% overall support sharing at least some services

Source: Tri-borough staff survey, February 2011, 2,314 employees overall, H&F (538), RBKC (897), WCC (879)

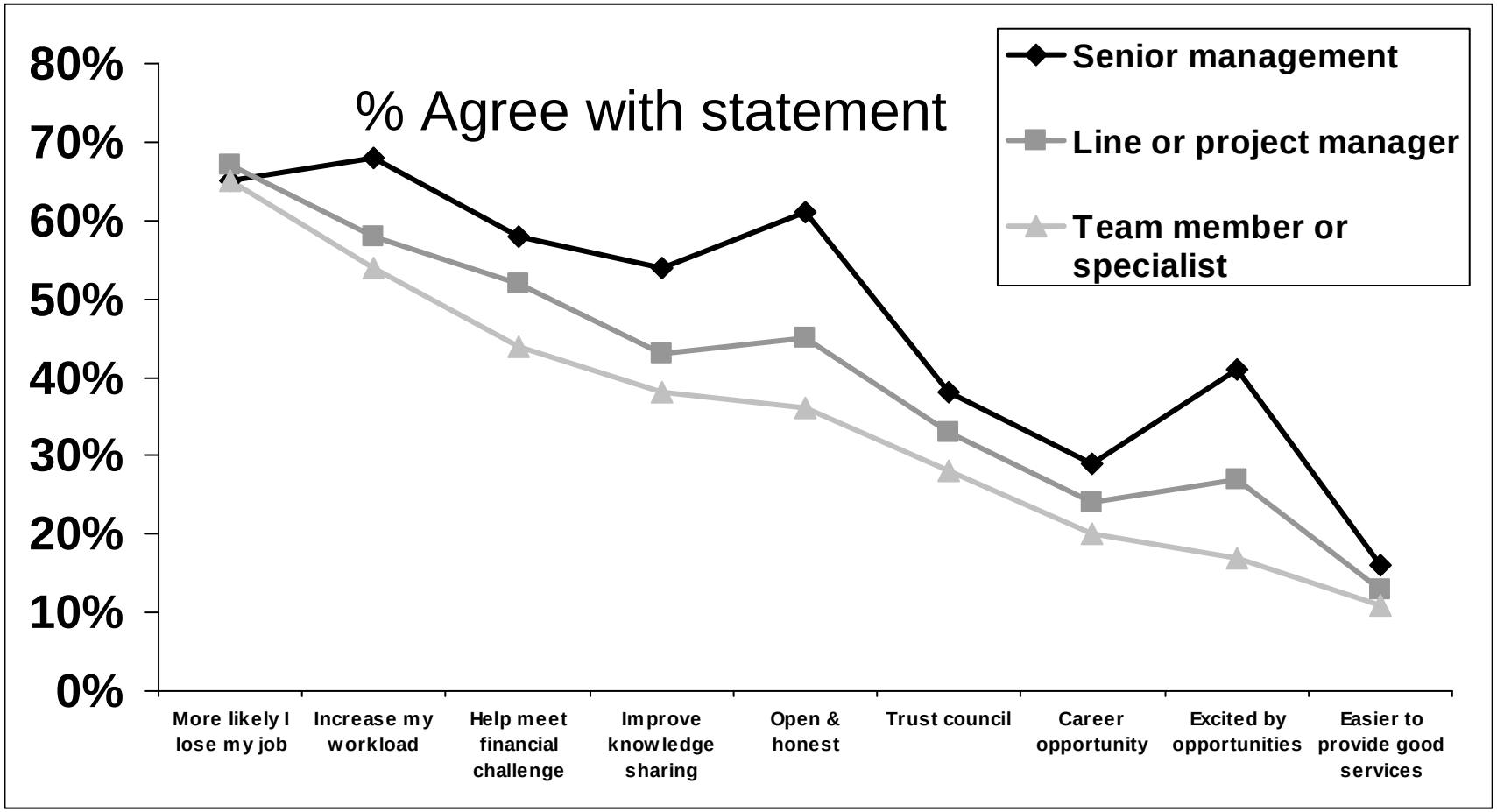
What should Tri-borough achieve? - staff

Question 8: Which two or three of the following do you think are most important for the council to look to achieve by sharing services with the other local authorities?



Source: Tri-borough staff survey, February 2011, 2,314 employees overall, H&F (538), RBKC (897), WCC (879)

Perceptions of Tri-borough - staff



Source: Tri-borough staff survey, February 2011, 2,314 employees overall, H&F (538), RBKC (897), WCC (879)

Conclusions

All councils will have to consider trading and sharing

It is a test to the organisation and services to assess whether it does deliver value for money and how delivery can be improved

The service must come first – as managers we then have to decide the best way to allocate resources and responsibilities

Thank you