

Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee – 27 March 2018

Observations on and assessment of the implementation of the C21 Change Programme –

Manjeet Gill - Interim Chief Executive

The C21 programme has naturally been a key focus of mine since I arrived last September. My overall assessment of the programme is that it is ambitious and bold and an appropriate response to help address in part the ongoing funding challenges that this Council faces. I consider it to be founded on a solid outline business case. It encompasses many aspects that high performing Councils across the country are progressing and seeks to apply these organisationally wide. This increases its potential for greatly enhancing our customer focus but also increases the complexity of implementation. One of the most striking features is that the programme is being led and implemented by our own people. It is introducing and embedding the development of new skills among the Council's staff that will position it extremely well for continued improvement after the programme itself has finished. This together with the significant investment and focus in technology involved will, I feel, help to significantly future proof the organisation and improve resilience.

Progress / Performance of programme

As I have already said I consider this to be an impressive wide reaching ambitious programme. The planned financial savings are being secured. Phase one and Phase 2 tranche one will deliver £2.75m savings in 18/19 and £3m full year affect in 19/20.

The IT transformation is underway and well progressed. It is well resourced and is placing WBC at the front of the digital agenda. However the benefits of the programme are wider than financial and technological. The programme will see a transformation in the way we interact with our customers. Enhanced customer focus is at the heart of the design of customer and case management enabling more issues to be resolved more quickly and providing better customer service through all interactions with our residents, clients and other service users. All this is also designed to be inclusive particularly for customers and residents who can't or don't want to engage digitally

Central to this is the development of our localities offer. The development and design of this is progressing well with Members at the heart of the design process. Our Towns and Parishes are also increasingly being involved and we have had offers from at least 3 to pilot new arrangements. Our voluntary sector partners are also engaged.

Impact of Phase 1

As indicated above the planned financial savings from Phase 1 have been successfully secured. The new roles of Case Owner and Relationship Manager are bedding in very well across the new Corporate Services areas. In People Strategy and Commissioning there has been some delay in full mobilisation due to needing to recruit to posts. Place commissioning which was more fully staffed from go live is functioning well particularly around the housing and 5 year land supply issues and is working to prepare our new Partnership Plan. It is however inevitable that as we embed our new structures and ways of working that some detailed arrangements may need to be revised due to the nature of complexity that is only understood during implementation.

Use of learning

I have seen a good use of learning from Phase 1 particularly focused around the staff feedback from those involved. Significant changes were made to the staff engagement and HR processes for Phase 2 tranche 1 which have built on the learning from Phase 1 well. This phase has witnessed a much greater training and involvement of the AD's and Tier 4 managers in the consultation process. Whilst there is always room for further improvement, feedback has shown that staff feel more confident that their managers are leading these processes.

The programme has also worked well to reduce the levels of staff disruption through the 'at risk' process. Indeed the proportion of assimilations verses at risk have been reversed. This is not only less disruptive for staff but also to service delivery. Again this has built on the learning from feedback

Governance

I am content that programme is well governed and managed. The CLT has sufficient oversight. The Programme Director reports weekly and provides programme and Council wide leadership and co-ordination. The cross party Member group is well engaged in programme meeting regularly, holding officers to account and playing a crucial role helping to design and implement communications with colleagues and the public. Lead Member involvement is good and democratic oversight is provided regularly by Executive, Audit and O&S.

People Services Delay

The delay in progressing the programme in People Services is unfortunate but understandable. As Chief Executive I consider it is essential that the Interim Director has sufficient time to undertake a stock take of the services we provide for our most vulnerable residents. The Programme Director and Programme Manager are engaging with the People Services Directorate and planning is progressing. Involvement of Optalis and our partners in the wider health system is also being brokered. I would hope that the programme will be able to resume shortly.