Performance and Finance Scrutiny Committee
15 May 2020
Service Led Improvement
Report by Director of Finance and Support Services

Summary

The report provides an update on the Council's redesign activities.   It summarises achievements of the Step Up Programme and the Whole Council Design Programme, and outlines the key programmes to be delivered under the next phase of Service Led Improvement.

The focus for scrutiny

The committee is asked to review the report with a particular focus on ensuring that:-

- The savings, costs achieved to date, and what has been achieved in terms of transformation and improving efficiency/effectiveness across the Council have been identified;

- The refreshed programme focusses on the priorities of the County Council going forwards;

- There are clear and achievable costs and savings identified within the programme budget along with an indicative timeline for achieving the savings; and

- Risks to achieving the improvements have been identified and are being managed.

1.   Background and Context

1.1   Since 2016, West Sussex County Council's approach to service improvement has evolved. The Step Up Programme (2016 – 2018) sought to drive out savings while improving performance.

1.2   The original scope of the programme was broad. A total of 41 projects were initiated under the programme banner under a number of linked work streams, ranging from improvements to social care to improvements in our IT infrastructure. All projects were directly linked to achievement of one of the five priorities contained in The West Sussex Plan.

1.3   A range of benefits and service improvements were delivered by the Step Up Programme, including installing wi-fi in hospitals, so that the County Council's embedded staff can access the network, facilitating people

returning home; new IT equipment and Office 365 has been rolled out across the County Council and a number of solar farms have been delivered.

1.4   Following the closure of the Step Up Programme in 2018, Whole Council Design (WCD) was formally launched.

1.5   The WCD programme focussed on improvements across three main programmes; Customer, Communities and One Council. Several workstreams progressed within these programmes including Right Service, Right Place, Our Work Anywhere, Community Hubs and Smart Core. There was also an active Accelerated Opportunities workstream.

1.6   As part of the **Right Service, Right Place** activities the Council has invested in technology to simplify the journey for internal and external customers. A number of processes have been redesigned and new e-forms introduced. Twenty-eight workflow routes, and associated forms, have been redesigned with a further 9 routes in development.

1.7   A specific example of improvement is the work on website transactional forms. The resident journey has been further enhanced and simplified through implementation of a number of new forms including Contact the Council, Highways Claims, Safeguarding, Registrars Certificate Request and Library Item Request forms – this approach has simplified the user journey, while providing a consistent corporate look and feel, where appropriate with the additional benefit of residents/users being able to create a user account to speed forms/workflow interactions with the County Council in the future.

1.8   The payment processes have been streamlined by the development and implementation of Certifying Officer Workflows, P Card and Embedded P Card Request Forms, Single Tender Waiver Workflows and Payment Requisition Workflows (some in development) which will replace various Excel and Word-based documents with intelligent guided forms directly available via the intranet. This simplifies processes, reducing time to complete, while also improving compliance auditability with all data stored centrally with the ability to draw out key management information/performance measures.

1.9   For Fire and Rescue Operations, we have developed and deployed a single authenticated mobile portal enabling Officers and Firefighters to undertake reporting and operational activities directly from any location where they can get mobile reception, this portal has replaced numerous outdated paper forms, removed all administrative calls to fire control, improved speediness of reporting (e.g. vehicle defects) and provided the service with a single set of key metrics that is being built into the FRS PowerBI MI dashboard.

1.10   As part of the **Communities Hub Programme**, Worthing Community Hub has been developed and now in delivery; contracts are to be let within a month and Worthing Community Hub is on track to open during October 2020.

1.11 The **Smart Core** project focussed on the replacement programme for the Council's Business Management Systems. The Council has now gone out to procurement for the replacement systems.

1.12 As part of the **Accelerated Opportunities**, the Big Exchange Staff App was launched as part of the Whole Council Design work, which enables direct, speedy communication with West Sussex County Council Staff.

1.13 **Our Work Anywhere** set the ambition to have a more mobile and agile workforce. The programme ensured that smart phones were deployed to staff where needed, tablets were issued to ease the administrative burden on staff and helped in establishing the replacement products as part of the refresh of laptops and desktops.

1.14 The WCD approach to service redesign was budgeted to deliver £1.5m savings in 2019-20 with further savings planned for future years. The 2019/20 savings were expected mainly to be achieved through three projects: Our Work Anywhere, Right Service, Right Place, and Efficiencies from implementing a new staff app.

1.15 Many of the planned savings were intended to be delivered through efficiencies within Children's Services and as a result of the Ofsted Report it was agreed that focussing on a savings agenda within Children's Services was not a priority at this point. A number of staff within the Transformation Portfolio Office were removed from progressing work on Our Work Anywhere and Right Service, Right Place and were redeployed on progressing improvement plans in Children's and the Fire and Rescue Service.

1.16 Following the challenge of delivering efficiencies and senior management changes, a review of Whole Council Design has been undertaken. This in-depth review has examined the programme for the workstreams to re-prioritise timelines, costs and benefits.

2 Proposal

2.1 Following a review of the Whole Council Design Programme, it has been decided to focus resources on key Council delivery priorities:

- Children's Service Improvement

- Fire & Rescue Improvement

- Customer Digital

- Support Focus

- Smart Core

2.2 West Sussex County Council will deploy its programme and project management resources on priority delivery projects for the County Council.

Two will be the major service improvement programmes underway: Children's and Fire & Rescue.

2.3 Three will be cross-cutting programmes; Smart Core, which is mobilised; Customer Digital - focusing on improving service delivery through digitisation, simplification of processes and streamlining customer journeys; Support Focus – improving the efficiency and effectiveness of support activity through rationalisation, modernisation and redesign of processes. These two programmes are being mobilised and will be centrally supported, but design will be service led; linking directly to service specific change programmes that are underway, to ensure a holistic approach.

2.4 Work is now underway to mobilise the Customer Digital and Support Focus programmes; with Executive Director Place Services (Customer Digital) and the Director for Finance and Support Services (Support Focus) appointed as Senior Responsible Owners, with the Executive Leadership Team (ELT) overseeing delivery.

2.5 The first stage of delivery is to work alongside key services to confirm priority areas of opportunity, to establish a robust and agile way of making rapid progress and to start delivering improvements in services. The approach will be on a service-by-service basis, rather than engaging with all services at the same time, to ensure effective delivery of service re-design. Appendix 1 attached summarises the programme specifications for the Customer Digital and Support Focus programmes which restarted on 25 February.

2.6 It is the intention that Customer Digital and Support Focus are focussed on the delivery of the £2.4 million savings allocated to service transformation in the 2020/2021 budget and further £2.6m in the 2021/22 budget.

2.7 Worthing Community Hub will continue to be delivered, and the Executive Director Place Services and his team in Place Services are leading.

3 Resources

3.1 The resources invested in the Whole Council Design programme have been reported quarterly as part of the TPM and appears elsewhere on this Agenda. The WCD programme to date is funded through a revenue budget allocation of £867k with projects for service transformation being funded through the Service Transformation Reserve. For 2019/20 it is estimated that £2.5m will be spent on projects prior to the end of the year.

4 Issues for consideration by the Select Committee

4.1 Does the refreshed approach focus on the right areas?

4.2 Will the refreshed approach delivery value for money?

5 Consultation

5.1 ELT have considered and agreed this approach.

5.2 The Cabinet Member for Economy and Corporate Resources has considered and agreed this approach.

6 Risk Implications and Mitigations

Risk	Mitigating Action (in place or planned)
Service improvement is not delivered	Governance at the right level and programme and project management support in place. Services will lead on individual re-design, with expert central support.
Service improvement delivered, but savings are not	Assumptions and progress to be monitored and tested by Finance.
Competing priorities mean that service led transformation is not delivered	Senior Responsible Owners of programmes will ensure focus is on delivery, once programmes established, with ELT oversight.

7 Other Options Considered

7.1 Stopping service led improvement. This was rejected due both to the need to improve services to residents and deliver efficiency savings.

8 Equality Duty

8.1 Equality implications will be considered by individual programmes as they are delivered.

9 Social Value

9.1 Social Value considerations will be considered by individual programmes as they are delivered.

10 Crime and Disorder Implications

10.1 None

11 Human Rights Implications

11.1 None

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Appendix A   Programme detail and next steps: Customer Digital and Support Focus