

Crawley Borough Council

Report to Overview and Scrutiny Commission 01 November 2021

Review of Transformation Plan

Report of the *Deputy Chief Executive* – *DCE/09*

1. Purpose

- 1.1. The Transformation Plan was revised in 2020, following a report to OSC in November 2020 - [DCE/06](#), with six key themes and activities to deliver against the corporate priorities. The Transformation Board has monitored progress at regular intervals reporting back to the organisation through Portfolio Briefings, Chief Executive Inform and Q&A sessions, Team Brief, via the intranet and at the annual update to the Overview and Scrutiny Commission (OSC).
- 1.2. This report provides an update to the OSC. Some activities have been delivered sufficiently that any remaining activities are incorporated into service plans as business as usual, as outlined in the Review Report, which is attached as Appendix A.
- 1.3. The existing Transformation Plan is attached as Appendix B.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1. To the Overview and Scrutiny Commission:

That the Commission considers and notes the Review Report (Appendix A).

3. Reasons for the Recommendations

- 3.1.1 The Review Report (Appendix A) provides a mechanism to record and recognise the significant progress made against the current plan and provides a clear mandate for Officers to focus on the remaining activities during the next 12 months.

4. Background

- 4.1. Transformation consists of time-limited projects to drive strategic change in order to meet corporate objectives. These are projects that generally lie outside of any single service and require impetus and additional resource / focus in order to deliver and embed that change. The aim is to create change and for that change to become business as usual.
- 4.2. The current Transformation Plan by its own nature continues to evolve to ensure it responds to the challenges facing the Council and a new iteration will be prepared during 2022 onwards and will be presented to OSC in due course.

5. The Key Themes

5.1. As the Council reflects on the last year, it has once again demonstrated agility and resilience in a highly challenging context. In doing so it has continued to deliver services, met new demand within our community, and delivered a range of improvements to how we work, all within a challenging financial position.

5.2 Channel Shift

The closure of the Town Hall due to the pandemic created an increased demand for online services. Key enabling projects to update the Council's infrastructure have ensured services can be accessed using digital formats. This was most evident to support the array of government grant applications and the ability to adapt to constantly changing legislative requirements for local government. As the Council's customers use and become confident in these digital channels for simple, transactional and information driven activities, resources will be released to support those with more complex and individual needs. If this preference is to be maintained, online services need to offer the same, if not better, experience for customers as interacting over the phone or in person.

5.3 New Ways of Working

Lockdown has been transformative; teams have been able to support customers and deliver services remotely with the roll out of new technology such as MS Teams and this has also driven reduced printing and postage whilst the Town Hall has been closed. The migration of systems to the Cloud is a catalyst enabling a raft of service led system improvements that will deliver greater efficiencies and improved customer access in the coming year. The learning from the last year and the new practices created will carry into the new Town Hall, not as new concepts but as embedded ways of working.

5.3 People Strategy

The Council works hard to create a supportive culture and recognise that by listening to its staff it can achieve far better results by doing things "with" them rather than "to" them. There is a need for the workforce to continually adapt and change, and our plans outline actions to support, develop and upskill staff, creating the flexibility and resilience needed to embrace new opportunities and drive transformation from within.

5.4 Service Redesign

Key thematic reviews of differing size and scope were identified, taking a holistic approach to delivering services and creating efficiencies which ultimately improve outcomes. These redesigns are targeted rather than wholesale, but nonetheless will put foundations in place to enable future improvements to take place.

5.5 Commercialisation (PIPES model)

The Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) sets out the challenging financial context facing the Council in the coming years. Whilst there is much uncertainty the Council will nonetheless be faced with more difficult decisions around future service provision. Having a more commercial mindset opens up opportunities to help the Council better manage these challenges and minimise the need for future reductions in services. This theme focuses on developing new ideas, new income streams, greater efficiencies and savings to ensure the continued provision of high quality and sustainable frontline services.

5.6 **Assets**

Within the Council's current estate there are a range of land and spaces subject to varying levels of use. Several of these offer opportunities for the Council in terms of disposal, development or repurposing. Initially work has focused on Metcalf Way depot and the relocation of its staff and services, thereby freeing up the site for alternative use.

6. **Next Steps**

- 6.1. Work is already underway to deliver the remaining activities with progress monitored at regular intervals at the appropriate governance board.
- 6.2. The Transformation Board will provide a further Review Report to OSC in 2022 including the outline for a new plan once it is developed.

Report author and contact officer:

Ian Duke, Deputy Chief Executive
01293 438005
ian.duke@crawley.gov.uk