

**NEWCASTLE-UNDER-LYME BOROUGH COUNCIL**

**EXECUTIVE MANAGEMENT TEAM'S  
REPORT TO**

**Cabinet**  
**07 June 2022**

**Report Title:** One Council Programme Update

**Submitted by:** Chief Executive

**Portfolios:** One Council, People and Partnerships

**Ward(s) affected:** All

**Purpose of the Report**

To provide an update to cabinet on work and achievements to date of the One Council Programme.

**Recommendation**

**That Cabinet note the progress to date of the One Council Programme against specific programme areas of:**

- 1. One Front Door / Customer Hub progress**
- 2. Leadership and Management**
- 3. Information Advice and Guidance / Website**
- 4. Support Services**
- 5. Mobile Multi-Function Team**
- 6. Wider Management Team Portfolios**

**Reasons**

Programme remains on track in terms of timelines, budget and savings.

**1. Background**

- 1.1** The One Council Programme was launched in February 2021 following Full Council approval of the budget in order to meet the changing needs of our residents by increasing our ability to provide flexible, efficient and customer driven services. The programme focusses on reviewing customer need alongside modernising internal processes whilst developing our internal cultural transformation and ensuring we address financial demands.
- 1.2** The One Council programme facilitates a fundamental change in Newcastle-Under-Lyme Borough Council's operating model and how we address our challenges. Given the broad remit of the programme, overall aims have been considered by integrated workstreams aligned to core principles of delivery and achievement. Initial work was supported by the delivery partner Ignite Consulting who have enabled the team to develop skills in management change and service redesign.
- 1.3** The programme is a spend to save programme with an agreed investment of £1.2m. Recurrent benefits of £1m will be achieved moving forward. The savings are set to be staggered over the

life of the 3 year programme. Achieved and intended benefits are detailed in section 2.8 of this report.

## **2. Issues**

**2.1** In order to build the programme and consider the areas for change and focus, the broad concepts of purpose were considered alongside a benchmarking exercise which placed the customer and delivery of services at centre stage.

**2.2** This analysis supported the development of certain big ideas which have formulated the overall Future Operating Model design and have given a structure to the design of service change through the development of the “Big operating Model Building Blocks” of:

- Leadership and Management
- Information Advice and Guidance and Website
- One Front Door
- Internal Support
- Mobile Multifunction Team
- Strategy and Performance Team

**3.** An update on progress against each of these areas follows.

### **3.1 Leadership and Management**

The programme realises the importance of cultural development, attitudes, behaviours and overall quality and consistency of leadership as a driver for success. As such a dedicated Culture work stream was initiated which considered our purpose as a Council and provider of services as well as the important people driven elements which would support the achievement of our goals.

Following the development of the overall mission statement and related values, work has been ongoing to embed these vertically and horizontally throughout our processes, policies and behaviours. 2 staff surveys have been undertaken to benchmark progress, with positive results.

A Leadership Development programme was commissioned and delivered building on the behaviours and culture work in order to support leaders within the organisation to develop the strategic and performance led culture that we aim for. 3 face to face sessions were held for all leaders of Business Manger Level and above and were extremely well received. Leaders received guidance and development on themes of empowering and enabling staff through use of coaching and were challenged to push themselves out of their comfort zones to achieve the wider aims of the Council.

Development will continue as we launch the new Appraisal and Team Charter schemes which again will support increased performance of individuals and teams and embed the coaching culture throughout.

### **3.2 Information, Advice and Guidance / website**

A core aim of the overall programme is to enable residents and local business to self-serve wherever possible, thereby freeing up expertise and staff time to support delivery of complex tasks and innovative services in a more efficient model.

The new website launched on 27<sup>th</sup> October with improved functionality and self-service access.

The site is cleaner and more modern than our previous site and has been developed with a focus on functionality and ease of use to support the customer. The website developments integrate directly with a review of customer need and efficiency benefit which allow savings to be realised through more streamlined resourcing models.

Publicity campaigns such as vehicle livery reminding residents that they can access services online have been launched to support the channel shift to a digital support model. Accessibility has been a key element of the design work and we have been careful to ensure that vulnerable groups are not excluded or disadvantaged.

Work continues to monitor, review and embed changes as well as identify further areas for innovation

### **3.3 One Front Door**

The One Front Door, now known as the Customer Hub, is the customer facing function designed to offer end to end service, advice and transactional support to customers to the Council. Overtime this will sit across all outward facing services and by contacting the team, our customers will be able to undertake a range of tasks from planning related queries, to questions around waste collection. A strong feature of this service is providing the team with training and development across a range of services, as well as giving them access to in service technology to allow them to have up to date information and ability to transact specific elements of queries easily and efficiently.

Work initially focussed on the previous teams for Customer Services and Revenues and Benefits and the two areas have now been consolidated. Latterly, Newcastle Housing Teams have been embedded in the Customer Hub. Pulling the teams together, along with focussed work on processes alongside the website development has enabled the team to be resourced more efficiently. This has allowed the team to release members of staff who wish to seek opportunities elsewhere through our Mutually Agreed Resignation Scheme (MARS) which has driven a recurrent annual saving of £386k, part year savings for 2021/22 of £193k.

The transformation and transition has been challenging for the teams involved positive attitudes are supporting a successful shift in behaviours and activity. Training and support continues to embed these new ways of working effectively within the service and address legacy issues.

The next steps will be, as we embed the learning and knowledge in the team, for the service to look across the rest of the organisation and start to consider how this concept and model can grow to incorporate further processes and support our customers across a wider range of matters. Work has already been undertaken with the Streetscene team and plans are in place to consider opportunities within our planning service.

### **3.4 Internal Support**

The teams are currently undertaking activity mapping, skills review and opportunity assessment reviews across our support services.

Much like the One Front Door, there are anticipated efficiencies of scale to be identified here as well as process and technology developments which will enable a reduction in Whole Time Equivalents (WTE) assigned to the teams which is planned to be delivered through MARS as well as natural turnover.

A key element of the review is to consider how services can develop digital solutions to support a self-serve culture. A revised and interactive Intranet is in development to support efficiency, information sharing and resource review.

### **3.5 Mobile Multi-Function Team (MMF)**

The Mobile Multi Functional Team (MMF) is an exciting new team which enables an agile and diverse team of operatives to be dispatched where there is immediate need. Linked to a preventative delivery arm and the One Front Door, the impact on the Borough and residents will be significant and positive. After a successful pilot scheme, the teams grow in capability and strategy and are working closely with partners to address issues as they arise in the borough.

### **3.6 Strategy and Performance Team**

The Strategy and Performance Team will support services in their strategic aims as well as becoming a critical friend and challenging function in terms of performance and delivery. This function will enable the Council to better use data and performance indicators to drive outcomes against the Council Plan and other strategic aims.

In addition this service will look outward to strengthen relationships with our partners, consider policy and strategy development and ensure effort and activity drive us closer to our overall aims and vision.

A draft structure has been developed for the team which includes People, Communications and Strategy; and recruitment is scheduled for May 2022 for a number of key roles.

### **3.7 Benefits Realisation**

2021/22 benefits have been achieved with the design and implementation of the Customer Hub. This has enabled a reduction of 7.8WTE from the team with an annualised saving of £193k.

The programme remains on track to achieve the ongoing savings and this has been considered in the development of both the 2022/23 revenue budget and the Medium Term Financial Strategy.

#### 4. Operating Model

The overall Operating Model of the council has been revised to reflect a focus on purpose and outcome, holding the resident at the centre of our work. Heads of Service took on their new roles as from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2022

Chief Executive				Executive Director of Sustainable Environment			Executive Director of Growth and Development	
Strategy, People and Performance	Finance	Legal and Governance	Digital, IT and Internal Transactions	Sustainable Environment	Neighbourhood Delivery	Regulatory Services	Planning	Commercial Delivery
People and OD	Finance	Legal	IT	Recycling and Waste	Mobile Multi-Function	Food and Safety	Planning Policy	Assets and Property
Strategic Partnerships	Sundry Debtors	Governance	Digital	Streetscene	Town Centre and Community	Licensing	Development Control	Economic Development
Performance Management	Internal Audit	Complaints	Internal Transactions	Transport and contracts	Customer Hub	Housing	Building Control	Leisure
Communications	Creditors Payments	Democratic Support	Facilities Management	Sustainable Borough		Environmental Protection		Culture
Corporate Health and Safety		Procurement						Bereavement Services
		Risk & Insurance						

## 5 Proposal

5.1 That Cabinet note the progress to date of the One Council Programme against specific programme areas of:

- One Front Door / Customer Hub
- Leadership and Management
- Information Advice and Guidance / Website

## 6. Reasons for Proposed Solution

6.1 Benefits and outcomes remain on track as proposed.

## 7. Options Considered

7.1 None relevant to this report.

## 8. Legal and Statutory Implications

8.1 None directly arising from this report.

## 9. Equality Impact Assessment

9.1 None directly arising from this report.

## 10. Financial and Resource Implications

10.1 As a result of the COVID-19 pandemic and the financial challenge the pandemic has raised, the Council commissioned a full organisational review. The review identified a requirement to make significant changes to the way Council services are delivered, recognising both the impact of the pandemic in terms of creating more and different demands on Council services and the need to retain focus on the most vulnerable and disadvantaged in the community, whilst maximising opportunities for residents to help themselves, ensuring that they have a consistent and efficient interaction with the council when needed. The One Council Programme which is being undertaken over the period 2021/22 to 2022/23 will implement the necessary changes, which will involve extensive redesign of organisational structures, processes and technology, underpinned by changes in culture, leadership and governance.

10.2 Efficiencies and savings expected to be achieved through the One Council Programme will amount to circa £1m over a three year period and are recurring. In order to achieve the revenue savings, implementation costs of approximately £1.2m will need to be made. These implementation costs consist of website development, ICT costs, staff time including enhanced HR support, external delivery partner and training costs together with programme assurance and contingency. These costs will be funded via the flexible use of capital receipts and contributions from the Borough Growth Fund over a two year period.

## 11. Major Risks

11.1 The Programme has a dedicated RAID log which is reviewed weekly. No elements have been identified as major risks to delivery.

## 12. UN Sustainable Development Goals (UNSDG)



## 13. Key Decision Information

13.1 Not a Key Decision

## 14. Earlier Cabinet/Committee Resolutions

14.1 Programme approved February 2021 Council.

## 15. List of Appendices

15.1 None

## 16. Background Papers

16.1 n/a