



East
Northamptonshire
Council

Transformation Committee 16 January 2019

Update on the Office Transformation Project

Purpose of report

This report is a standing committee item, and provides an update on the key elements of the Office Transformation Project (OTP)

1.0 Introduction

1.1 At its meeting on 26th March 2018 the Finance Sub Committee agreed a report requesting the transfer of £150k of funding into the Capital Programme to support the OTP. This decision was taken within the context of the Commercialisation Strategy and the Asset Management Strategy, with particular reference to:

- Supporting the best use of assets to improve the working conditions of staff and delivery of services whilst also generating income.
- Setting the tone for new ways of working to ensure that staff have the best possible working conditions to drive effective delivery of services whilst preparing for proposed changes resulting from local government reform.

In addition to the £150,000, £21,000 was transferred from the ICT Transformation end user computing budget and 45k was added from the Asset Management reserve. This creates a total budget for the Office Transformation programme of £216,000

Subsequently, at its meeting on 2nd July 2018, the Transformation Committee agreed a report detailing the project mandate, structure, scope, finances and governance.

1.2 The Office Transformation Project's principles are:

- To create accommodation designed to meet the needs of staff
- Accommodation re-organisation co-ordinated with advances in paperless and mobile working
- To make better use of the glass concourse between reception and Red Brick – creating break-out/meeting room space
- Future proofing – implementing technology for now, to assist with the future
- To increase the number of formal bookable meeting rooms
- To increase the number of informal meeting spaces
- To create office spaces with minimal walls between teams to aid in communication and resilience around interlinked processes and projects but with noise levels acceptable to their occupants
- To retain open spaces within teams to avoid the feeling of clutter and associated stress
- The creation of break out areas away from desks for informal meetings, creative thinking or relaxation
- Utilisation of effective Wi-Fi throughout to support staff/teams to leave their areas to work in the most appropriate location/with the most appropriate people
- Workstations that make more effective use of space yet still allow enough room for Officers to comfortably complete their role

1.3 The OTP has currently been broken down into four phases:

- Phase 1a – Planning Services
- Phase 1b – ICT, Corporate Support, Senior Management, Finance/ENCOR, Customer Services, Land Charges, Communications and Community Safety
- Phase 2 – Environmental Services and Revenues and Benefits

- Phase 3 – All remaining teams/areas

1.4 On the completion of the OTP Phases 1a and 1b the Red Brick element of the ENC Cedar Drive facility will be empty and available for leasing. The aim of the OTP is to deliver these phases by April 2019. Allowing for some work to be completed on building preparation and marketing, it would be reasonable to assume it will be available from July 2019.

2.0 Update on Office Transformation Project

Since the last meeting of this Committee significant progress has been made on the following areas:

- Delivery of Phase 1a – Planning Services
- An initial enquiry from an interested party regarding renting Red Brick building

A more detailed update is provided in the following sections:

2.1 Delivery of Phase 1a – Planning Services

2.1.1 Asbestos Survey

A comprehensive asbestos surveys has been completed for all areas of the Cedar Drive facility within scope of Phase 1a. The completion of this assessment was a mandatory dependency for the various trade suppliers to commence work on site.

2.1.2 Removal, re-homing and disposal of excess furniture, equipment and paperwork

All existing furniture, equipment and paperwork from Planning Services was removed by the 26th November. These elements were either:

- Stored in a marquee by the ENC Transformation Team until either:
 1. Collected to be refurbished and reused in the new Planning Offices
 2. Rehomed by local councils, schools and employees of ENC
 3. Disposed of via Waste Services
- Disposed of via bulky waste collections organised by the ENC Waste Team
- Disposed of through a confidential waste collection organised by the ENC Facilities Team

A number of contributions have been made to the Chairman's Charities by the various parties that have benefitted from these items. The current total stands at £95 and is expected to rise to approx. £150

2.1.3 Displacement of staff

During the implementation period approximately thirty five Planning Staff were displaced from their usual desks. The Business Transformation Team engaged with all of these staff to understand their day to day needs for a work station at Cedar Drive over this period.

This need was married up with an understanding of the availability of workstations across the Cedar Drive Facility (mostly gained through engagement with Middle Managers) and a database created to allow staff to book themselves a desk on demand.

On current understanding this process has been very successful and has led to an unforeseen benefit of staff networking with colleagues from other departments and the improvement of cross department relationships.

2.1.4 Implementation of changes

Goodfellows Builders Ltd, the overarching contractor for OTP Phase 1a, started work on the 26th November. So far we have achieved:

- The removal of all carpet tiles

- The movement of all applicable network/power points to fulfil the needs of the new design
- The replacement of all network cables in Planning Services with Cat 6 cable
- The removal and movement of walls to fulfil the new design
- The assembly of fifty desks with under desk PC mounts and ten shelving units
- Wall mounting of three networked large screens for presentation purposes
- The re-carpeting of approx. 550 sq. mtrs
- The filling and repainting of all remaining and newly situated walls
- The cleaning and varnishing of all windowsills and doors
- The replacement of all door furniture
- The installation of new blinds
- The installation of 45 monitor arms and the mounting of 90 monitors
- The movement of fire sensors and addition of emergency lighting.
- The purchase, management and installation of approx. 300 items of furniture and equipment
- The purchase and test and install of 4 thin client PC's with wireless keyboard and mice to increase meeting space capability

Albeit all Planning Staff were resituated back in the newly refurbished office space for the first day of the new year, the final elements of the implementation will be completed mid January. These are:

- The installation of 10 sound-inhibiting wall sections and one informal meeting pod with large screen, laptop dock, thin client and wireless keyboard and mouse.
- Installation of 50 lockers (mixture of large and small) for storage of personal items and PPE equipment.

2.1.6 Change of scope

During implementation of OTP Phase 1a there were additions to scope and inclusion of aspects of other programmes which impacted on delivery. These include:

- The removal of all existing Cat 5 network cable and ports and replacement to Cat 6 standards
- The replacement of all blinds
- The replacement of all door furniture
- The cleaning and varnishing of all windowsills and doors
- Painting of all radiators
- The addition of emergency lighting above fire escape signs

These changes have had the following implications:

- The extension of the implementation period by a week
- Additional Project Management time relating to the analysis of the requirements related to the above changes and the documenting of the new specifications
- Additional financial Project Management time relating to the inclusion of both ICT and Facilities Management deliverables within the OTP Phase 1
- The review of OTP Phase 1a moved to Jan 19 from late Dec 18
- The completion of a financial review and Resources analysis to improve the delivery of Phase 1b pushed to Jan 19 from late Dec 18.

2.1.7 Benefits realised

- Building Control have now been successfully moved out of the upper floor of the Red Brick Facility enabling the ability to lease or refurbish in preparation for leasing
- Elements of Phase 2 of the ICT Transformation Programme and the Facilities Management tasks have been delivered in conjunction with OTP, alleviating any further/future impact on staff
- Desk mounted adapters have been fitted to all work stations to reduce the amount of electricity used overnight
- An increase in the number of meeting rooms and the functionality available
- All Planning Services staff are now situated in the same area of the Cedar Drive facility to aid in staff management and communication

- The cleanliness and state of the environment has improved, which has a direct link to staff wellbeing.

2.1.8 Letting of Red Brick Building

- Site visits undertaken by prospective tenant
- Floor plans shared as basis for assessment by prospective tenant
- Questions around outside space, planning and car parking raised and discussed (no deal breakers at this stage)
- Prospective tenant looking to make decision in principle by end of March as basis for agreeing heads of terms
- If interested, prospective tenant will look to sign lease around May time to allow for refurbishment works over the summer ready for occupation from September
- It is envisaged that any refurbishments will be managed as a rent free period so as to avoid any upfront costs and to make sure the work meets the specific needs of the prospective tenant

3.0 **Communications**

3.1 OTP has continued its extensive and established Communications Strategy which contains, but is not limited to:

- Face to face engagement sessions with directly affected staff
- ENC HUB updates
- Monthly updates at the ENC Middle Managers meetings
- Quarterly updates at Exchange (Unison led employee forum)
- Biweekly updates at CMT
- Bimonthly Transformation Committee updates
- Monthly OTP Working Group meetings

3.2 In addition to the above communication methods, there has been constant communication with Planning Staff to support their period of displacement. Furthermore, any aspect of OTP that has impacted upon staff based in any proximity has been communicated either face to face, or via e-mail through their managers.

3.3 This approach to communication will be one of the project mechanisms evaluated at the end of Phase 1a. This will be done through a questionnaire directed at staff directly affected or involved in this phase of the project to enable an improved approach in future phases.

4.0 **Financial and Resource implications**

4.1 **The total OTP budget is £216,000; so far the total spend is £75,508.79.**

4.2 The below table shows the current/allocated spend against the original budget:

Budgets progression (by Phases)		
Programme Phase	Original total allocated budget	Current/allocated spend (ongoing)
Phase 1a	£52,127	£74,808.51
Phase 1b	£53,868	£700.28
Phase 2	£110,005	£0

4.3 Although Phase 1a of the OTP has not been delivered within the original estimated proportional budget split, the costs have substantially reduced from the estimated budget documented in the previous Transformation Committee report of £99,720. This was due to an extensive review and scrutiny of products/services and appropriate reallocation of costs to already existing Facilities Management budgets. As well as spreading the over spend across the remaining phases, the lessons learnt during Phase 1a should enable OTP to get back on budget. These lessons include a tighter working relationship between OTP, the ICT

Transformation Programme and the Facilities Management agenda to optimise benefits and minimise the impact on staff and service provision.

Further assessment and projections of the OTP will be included in a financial appraisal of Phase 1a, including final costs, estimated costs for future phases and implications for other budget areas, all of which will be included as part of the OTP Phase 1a Review/ Lessons Learnt process and will be reported to the Transformation Committee on 6th March.

5.0 Legal implications

5.1 Building Regulations

A Building Control application was submitted and all of the requests made by the Building surveyor are being met. A further inspection to sign off the works will take place before the implementation of Phase 1a is completed and a practical completion certificate issued.

5.2 Fire/Risk Assessment

A fire risk assessment has been ongoing during the implementation of Phase 1a. This has led to the inclusion of three emergency lights to improve visibility of the Fire Exit signage. Albeit the ENC fire plan has not been altered, a further fire assessment will be conducted upon completion of Phase 1a, updated and added to the fire plan.

6.0 Risk/Issue implications

6.1 The project risks/issues for the OTP are recorded and managed on the Business Transformation Risk Register. There are currently 11 risks/issues associated with the OTP that have being actively managed through documented Actions/Controls. (Two of which are currently evaluated as High Risk or Impact).

6.2 Risk/Issue examples

Issue – Initial programme cost estimates are exceeded as they were based on estimates and assumptions

Probability – High

Impact - Medium

Action/Control:

- Constant evaluation of products and services,
- Ongoing conversations with Project Sponsor and Executive around elements of OTP actually falling with Facilities Management budgets
- A detailed options paper regarding delivery of Phase 1a will be produced for consideration upon completion of Phase 1a

Risk examples

Risk/Issue – Planning Service Delivery is disrupted or impaired during implementation period

Probability – Medium

Impact - High

Action/Control:

- Process devised to house as many Planning Staff elsewhere within Cedar Drive rather than home working
- Support and guidance provided to all affected Planning Staff upon request

6.3 The actions/controls to manage the risks/ issues are deemed sufficient to reduce or offset their impact.

7.0 Equality and Diversity implications

This project has equality and diversity impact implications and therefore a full impact assessment has been completed and signed off by the ENC Corporate Support Manager/Equality and Diversity lead. The equality and diversity impact assessment was presented to this Committee at its meeting on 2 July 2018.

8.0 Constitutional Implications

8.1 The report does not have any constitutional implications.

9.0 Implications for our customers

9.1 During the implementation stage of each phase of the project there is a risk we negatively impact affected staffs ability to provide their specialist service. This is recorded on the Business Transformation Risk Register and will be a key consideration in the implementation plan. During the Phase 1a review engagement will be completed with Planning Managers and any available service performance levels reviewed to further understand any impact of implementation.

10.0 Privacy Implications

10.1 This project has privacy implications and therefore a full impact assessment has been completed and signed off by the ENC Data Protection Officer. The privacy impact assessment was presented to this Committee at its meeting on 2 July 2018.

11.0 Corporate Outcomes

11.1 This report contributes to the following corporate outcomes:


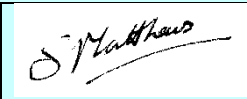
- **Good Quality of Life** – Improve the effectiveness of service delivery
- **Good value for money** – Better use of assets and basis for generating income and improving productivity.
- **Effective Partnership working** – Improve ways of working both internally and externally through having a more flexible approach which will include exploring shared facilities with partners.

12.0 Recommendations

12.1 The Committee is asked to:

- (1) Note the progress being made on the Office Transformation Project;
- (2) Note that details of the Phase 1a Review/ Lessons Learnt process, which will include a full financial appraisal of Phase 1a and the implications for the whole OTP Programme, will be reported at the next Transformation Committee on 6th March.
- (3) Note that progress on the internal Business Transformation Paperless and iDOX programmes will be reported at the next Transformation Committee on March 6th

(Reason – To place the Council in the best position possible during a significant period of transformation and change)

Legal	Power:				
	Other considerations:				
Background Papers:	Report on the Office Transformation Project, Transformation Committee on 7th Nov 2018 Report on the Office Transformation Project, Transformation Committee on 2nd July 2018 Report on the Office Transformation Project to Finance Sub Committee, 26 th March 2018				
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