

TRANSFORMATION COMMITTEE

Date: 17 April 2019

Venue: East Northamptonshire House, Cedar Drive, Thrapston

Time: 7.30pm

Present: Councillors: Helen Howell (Chairman)
Colin Wright (Vice Chairman)
Stephen North (Leader of the Council)
David Jenney (Deputy Leader of the Council)

Tony Boto Richard Lewis
John Farrar Harriet Pentland
Richard Gell Janet Pinnock
Roger Glithero JP Colin Wright

536. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

An apology for absence was received from Councillor Marion Hollomon.

537. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

The minutes of the meeting held on 6 March 2019 were approved and signed by the Chairman.

538. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations.

539. QUESTIONS UNDER COUNCIL PROCEDURE RULE 10.3

There were no questions submitted under Procedure Rule 10.3.

540. UNITARY UPDATE

The Chief Executive provided a report on unitary developments, which included the following areas of update:

- All 8 councils had now agreed Terms of Reference for the relevant Joint Committee for their area - West or North Northamptonshire - and had also decided their preferred content of the Structural Change Orders (minute 426 of the Extraordinary Council meeting on 25 February 2019 refers). Those preferences had been submitted to the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government.

- A decision by the Secretary of State was still awaited in respect of the submitted proposal for local government reorganisation.
- The first meeting of the West Northamptonshire Joint Committee had taken place on 26 March and had dealt with procedural items such as the election of the Chair and Vice-Chair and confirmation of the Terms of Reference adopted by the constituent councils.
- It was still the intention that the North Northamptonshire Joint Committee would not meet until such time as the Secretary of State had made his decision. This would be kept under review.
- Vesting Day was still proposed for 1 April 2020; the priority was for services to be safe and legal then, but discussions were still taking place about the scope for a more transformational programme.
- The programme structure and budget were still to be signed off by the Leaders' and Chief Executives' Group.

RESOLVED:

That the unitary update be noted.

(Reason: to keep Members up to date with developments on the unitary proposal)

541. JOINT WORKING WITH BOROUGH COUNCIL OF WELLINGBOROUGH

Members received a report from the Business Transformation Manager updating them on the progress made in joint working with the Borough Council of Wellingborough (BCW).

Since the last meeting of the Committee, the key areas of progress with BCW had been:

- A series of scrutiny meetings with each service established and underway.
- A "What is Joint Working?" document had been published, and reviewed for comment by UNISON.
- Building Control's work was so well established that its joint working was ready to be launched.

The report emphasised the work that had, or would, be undertaken:-

- **Joint Working Team Charters** had been completed for each service, setting out the approach to working, how staff would work together and expected behaviours
- **Joint Working Plans** had been completed for each service with steps to be taken to optimise the opportunity of working together, resources required, risks to be managed and customer benefits
- **Communication** to Staff via senior managers/service managers and teams to develop joint working plans meetings, updates to Middle Managers Group and Xchange, team messages/briefing notes to staff, and formal discussion with UNISON

- **Governance arrangements** were being pursued via reporting to reporting to councillors; a Progress Monitoring Board, led by senior officers from each council; joint project teams for each service; and the regular Project Board scrutiny sessions with each service pair to challenge and approve progress.
- **Local Government Re-organisation Proposal outcome** in relation to joint working with BCW would actively be considered as part of developing joint working plans by each service, to ensure that the project's progress was aligned with the wider unitary journey.
- **Business Transformation Team (BTT)** was working on this project, utilising half of their staff.

More detailed progress under each of the seven services (Revenues & Benefits/ Building Control/ Land Charges/ Planning Administration/ Democratic Services/ Elections/ Communications) was provided in the report to Members and the Business Transformation Manager updated the meeting on further progress since the despatch of the report.

Members asked a number of questions and officers emphasised that overall, staff were enthusiastic about the joint working approach. Where, however, there were some staff who were reluctant to change, attempts were being made by managers to secure their engagement.

RESOLVED:

That the progress on joint working with the Borough Council of Wellingborough be noted.

(Reason – Consistency with previous decisions)

542. UPDATE ON THE OFFICE TRANSFORMATION PROJECT

The Business Transformation Manager provided a report on progress with the Office Transformation Project (OTP).

The reported concentrated on the following areas:

Feedback on Phase 1a: Quote/schedule had been obtained for additional sound insulation and ventilation in the newly created meeting rooms and the addition of vision panels to a number of doors (work, to be completed in evenings/at weekends)

Organisational clear out of storage: Plan instigated and progress being made on waste disposal

Phase 1b: Procurement - Early engagement with a lead contractor had followed a procurement exemption and would allow a June/July 2019 implementation to be achieved

Phase 1b: Engagement and evolution of design completed with all appropriate Service Heads and Middle Managers, before input from all staff and then sign-off from the Programme Board allowing final layout/technical drawings/specification

Phase 2: Procurement - in parallel to the progression of Phase 1a, the chartered surveyor employed to assist with OTP was developing the documentation for tender. "Sign-off" was anticipated for May 2019, with implementation by September 2019.

A full briefing for Members would be provided in May 2019.

RESOLVED:

That progress being made on the Office Transformation project be noted.

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

Chairman