

## **Nottingham City Council**

### **Overview and Scrutiny Committee**

**Minutes of the meeting held at Ground Floor Committee Room - Loxley House, Station Street, Nottingham, NG2 3NG on 6 April 2022 from 2.00 pm - 3.32 pm**

#### **Membership**

##### **Present**

Councillor Anne Peach (Chair)  
Councillor Georgia Power (Vice Chair)  
Councillor Carole McCulloch (Vice Chair)  
Councillor Patience Uloma Ifediora  
Councillor Corall Jenkins  
Councillor Gul Nawaz Khan  
Councillor Jane Lakey  
Councillor Angharad Roberts  
Councillor Andrew Rule

##### **Absent**

Councillor Sajid Mohammed  
Councillor Toby Neal  
Councillor Audra Wynter

#### **Colleagues, partners and others in attendance:**

Beth Brown - Head of Legal and Governance Services  
Richard Grice - Transformation Programme Director  
Councillor Jay Hayes - Executive Assistant for Health, Neighbourhoods and Safety  
Councillor Adele Williams - Portfolio Holder for Adults and Health  
Laura Wilson – Senior Governance Officer  
Catherine Ziane-Pryor – Governance Officer

#### **67 Apologies for absence**

Councillor Audra Wynter – leave

#### **68 Declarations of interests**

None.

#### **69 Minutes**

Subject to deleting the reference to Houses in Multiple Occupation in minute 66(b)(ii), Work Programme, the minutes of the meeting held on 9 March 2022 were confirmed as a true record and signed by the Chair.

#### **70 The Council's Transformation Programme**

Councillor Adele Williams, Portfolio Holder for Adults and Health (Theme Lead), Councillor Jay Hayes, Executive Assistant for Health, Neighbourhoods and Safety, who is covering for Councillor Rebecca Langton while she is on maternity leave, and Richard Grice, Transformation Programme Director, were in attendance to provide the Committee with an update on the progress of the City Council's Transformation Programme since the Committee last reviewed it 6 months ago.

It is noted that any references to Children, and Health Adult Social Care, will be dealt with by those respective Scrutiny Committees.

The following points were highlighted:

- a) the key focus of the Transformation Programme is to respond to the challenges of the current financial circumstances and diminished Local Authority funding, with the added pressures of citizens experiencing additional needs as a result of ongoing austerity;
- b) rather than manage service decline as a result of reduced budget, the decision was made to take a completely fresh approach;
- c) the Transformation Programme is focusing on ensuring that there are efficient processes and the services provided are as effective as possible, whilst the same time improving outcomes and reducing costs;
- d) the new approach:
  - i. enables the workforce to use the talents they have to the best their ability;
  - ii. is financially benchmarked against well performing services within other local authorities;
  - iii. provides a joined up/co-ordinated and comprehensive service, which is easily accessible, simple and not overly complicated;
- e) there will be a return to highlighting the importance of early intervention as this has been seen to strengthen communities;
- f) existing processes have been simplified and standardised, and assurance sought that there is as little duplication as is possible;
- g) decisions on transformation investment are made with reference to the following principles:
  - i. delivery of financial benefit;
  - ii. joining up services for residents and businesses;
  - iii. making services more accessible;
  - iv. simplifying, standardising and automating ways of working;
  - v. enabling early intervention and prevention;
  - vi. supporting the move from traditional provision to participation.
- h) to improve services and deliver savings careful consideration is being given to the customer front door, business support, and procurement approach;
- i) there will be a financial impact in all areas with business cases being developed for modernisation and transformation of property management, commercial services and management of ICT;
- j) there are big changes ahead with new approaches for both staff and citizens;
- k) currently there is a lot of external support, but the longer term aim is to up-skill employees to take this on;

- l) a Change Academy has been established with training provider PWC for existing staff, whereby they enrolled in intensive nine week period of accelerated training in project management and business analysis. To date, 15 staff have taken part with five further staff studying a shorter procurement training programme;
- m) five staff graduated from the Change Academy within the past few days and it is anticipated that by late summer, the initiative will positively impact on staffing resilience;
- n) there are seven citizens currently engaged as apprentices.

Committee members' questions were responded to as follows:

- o) approaches across services had very different design standards. Some areas of adult social care had focused on 'what's the matter', whilst the new approach seeks to find out 'what matters to you';
- p) savings have been made in Adult Social Care from being less reliant on residential care with a preference for home based care. This is making a saving but still providing the best benefit for the citizens directly concerned;
- q) wherever possible compulsory redundancies of staff will be avoided and post losses does not necessarily result in job losses, but savings can be made in this area;
- r) Children's Services is predicted to be the most difficult area to implement change, but to date, the workforce has been really involved, encouraging and helpful;
- s) consolidation of front door services will provide savings, increase efficiency, and provide a smoother access to services for citizens, as currently there are lots of different routes to contact the services, including from other areas of the council. In reducing these numbers and consolidating entry via a smaller customer hub, preferably, but not exclusively, using online channels, support can be provided effectively from one place;
- t) there is a specific business support programme which is examining data analysis and reporting and internal processes were there appears to be a lot of manual duplication of information entry. Shorter processes will be considered and the use of additional technology considered;
- u) 60 different service processes are to be scrutinised within the rapid improvement projects;
- v) savings achieved to date have been from a mix sources, but mainly from vacant posts;
- w) a more strategic approach will be developed for procurement and some contracts will be examined stress tested and then business models developed;
- x) specific skills to support the transformation have been bought in but consultants are working to train existing staff to maintain those skills for longer term benefit;
- y) senior officers regularly meet with the Transformation Board and liaise regularly with the Trade Unions as it's important to listen to what they have to say and staff buy-in of the transformation is important, as is political buy-in;

- z) every time the transformation plan and update has been presented to the Transformation Board, it has been well received in spite of the challenge on points such as engagement and involvement when it comes to changes in systems and workforce, but we are keen to build these in as all processes need to work;
- aa) a further report with more detail, including how health services will be made better and not just the changes made to date, can be provided for the wave 3 update. Although meaningful statistics may not yet be available, it is possible to provide a more detailed examination of individual programmes for the Committee's consideration at a future meeting;
- bb) the £15 million budget for improvement and transformation and ongoing work is considered sufficient to cover the cost of the predicted work and result in value for money for the Council. To date the transformation plan is working to schedule and may even over deliver;
- cc) members should be assured that the savings achieved for children and adult services are completely separate in each section of the budgets and there is no overlap or duplicate counting;
- dd) risk is mapped as a matter of course in all streams of work;
- ee) Nottingham City Council is a national leader in this level of transformation;
- ff) there has been no staff reluctance to support the Transition Programme, but change is very different in each area and the importance to engage staff from the very start and along the way is acknowledged;
- gg) staff and citizens recognise that the council needs to secure financially sustainable services, but also ensure that people want to come to work. It is important to support the feeling that staff are really making a difference and contributing to the service;
- hh) there are challenges, including culture change, for which consideration is given to staff by not moving people too far from frontline services and ensuring that the transformation investment is seen as an investment for the future of the service and its staff;
- ii) with regard to the new IT systems, it is likely that they will require an increased budget but the majority of hardware and software is already in place, but there is still more to do regarding to licences and training although the technology is simpler to use. It is expected that the new systems will 'go live' by this time next year.

Comments from the committee included:

- jj) the proactive movement to new skills and new focuses is welcome and officers should be congratulated;
- kk) members want to ensure that the transformation is a success so more detail of what is proposed for each service area is required for examination, particularly with regard to changes in services to citizens and the influence of changes of business support;

- ll) the claim that business support for Nottingham services costs 25% more than for other local authorities is alarming and needs to be addressed;
- mm) we need to ensure that existing services continue to be delivered and that if existing staff feel stressed, this is closely monitored and addressed where possible;
- nn) the additional resilience being built into the new systems is welcomed;
- oo) people are often reluctant to adapt to change so it's important have staff on board for the whole of the transformation journey;
- pp) it is inevitable that substantial changes will take place and that Council services will change. This will have a knock-on effect, with consequences which will require resilience in areas beyond the initial impact.

Whilst members of the Committee requested further detail to support more thorough consideration, following a brief discussion, it was determined that the Customer First Transformation Programme item scheduled for next month's meeting was the first step to looking at the individual transformation projects in more detail, and the Committee will consider when to include further projects in the work programme.

**Resolved to request that the key deliverables and milestones for the Transformation Programme are circulated to Committee members.**

## **71 Work Programme 2022-23**

Beth Brown, Head of Legal and Governance, presented the work programme, noting that the order of items had changed with the agreement of the Chair since last presented due to officer and Portfolio Holder availability.

Following a discussion on item scheduling, particularly related to the timely consideration of the consultation process for library transformation prior to submission to Executive Board, and the item on Selective Licensing, the Committee determined that an informal briefing note regarding the selective licensing item should be requested for circulation to members of the Committee. This would then better inform the Committee and enable a decision to be made on which items should be submitted to which committee meeting.

**Resolved to request that a briefing note on the methodology and consultation for Selective Licensing be provided to Committee members.**