



One Council
Programme Director Caroline Barlow

Programme Objective:

An internal modernisation programme which places the customer - that's our residents, businesses and partners at the heart of everything we do. Working together collaboratively, our delivery plan is broken down into eight work-streams to build a modern, flexible and efficient council. Our workforce are the organisation's single biggest asset and are integral in helping us deliver exceptional services to our residents and customers.

Welcome to the January 2020 update on the One Council work programme.

You may remember that I emailed you before Christmas to introduce the One Council programme and give you an introduction to some of the things that we want to do. Well I want to make sure I keep you up-to date on what is happening and so, as well as weekly features in All About Us, I will be producing regular updates on the progress that we are making on One Council.

So what have we done so far?

The first task that we needed to do was understand the size and scope of the project and agree who was going to do what. So we have:

- Appointed leads for the 8 workstreams. These are shown below
- Identified priorities for each of the 8 workstreams. These have been developed based on our strategic priorities and previously agreed commitments and agreed with the Strategic Leadership Team and Labour Members
- From the priorities identified, produced a final programme scope – our One Council Plan on a Page [General\One Council Plan on a Page final.pdf](#)
- Visited with a number of Management Teams across the Council to present the One Council Plan on a Page, to explain the programme to them and to seek their views. We will continue to do this throughout the New Year.

Our One Council programme sets out the priorities for Corporate Services for the year ahead. It will be a key component of the Council Plan which is currently being developed.

Following my email I received a number of responses from staff keen to express their support as to what we are doing and also wanting to be involved as we take the programme forward. Thankyou to everyone who has contacted me to express enthusiasm and excitement for what we are proposing. It is really pleasing to get such positive feedback. It indicates that there is real positivity and energy within our staff to modernize and adapt and I look forward to working with you.

We want to harness that energy and ensure that there is ongoing momentum to drive the Programme forwards at pace. There has already been significant progress on a number of key activities and these are set out below.



Workstream Lead Karen Gillis



Completed

- We have got approval from Cabinet and funding has been agreed to replace our website / Customer Records Management (CRM) and Content Management System (CMS) with a modern, intuitive and easy-to-use system. This will significantly improve the experience for our residents when they contact the Council, as well as for staff, when responding to CRM requests. Soft market testing has been undertaken and specifications drawn up for prospective providers.
- We have completed draft Customer Services Strategy and Standards setting out the standards of behaviour that we will operate to when we deal with residents and the community. However standards operate both ways and we will be clear with our public that our staff work very hard and expect to be treated with respect too. We will be doing more work on this over the months ahead.
- We have trialled Alexa which is now available on the website.

Future Actions

- We have visits planned to other LAs to see their websites and CRM in operation to make sure that we get the right product for us
- We are aiming to get approval for our preferred provider to go to Cabinet in February 2020. Once we have this approval then we will be developing a robust Project Implementation Plan which will cover the next 9 to 12 months to ensure a safe, effective and properly planned rollout of the new systems. We will want to engage with users – including our residents - in the testing of this as much as possible
- We have further developments planned for the use of Artificial Intelligence and Chatbots
- We will be redesigning our online forms to ensure consistency, transparency, and intuitive ease of use.
- We intend to rollout and embed Council Wide Customer Services standards
- We are making improvements to Wesley House reception by replacing the kiosks



Workstream Lead Ste Sharples



Completed

- In order to modernise our workforce and move to agile working, we are refreshing our old devices with modern Surface-Pros and rolling out Office 365 and SharePoint. We have received approval for this to be done on a rolling 3 year basis to ensure a properly planned and strategically aligned replacement programme. The roll-out has commenced at Atlas House with over 400 new devices already installed
- The replacement for the Nortel telephones has commenced; the new telephony system is currently being piloted within the IT Section
- We are endeavouring to improve our relationships with colleagues across the rest of the Council. We have significantly improved the way that we communicate with you in relation to new initiatives which hopefully you will have seen in updates in AllAboutUs and the new Intranet, and we are now attending departmental management teams as part of improving our IT Business Partnering approach.

Future Actions

- We are finalising our work with Microsoft in creating our refreshed IT strategy, setting out our strategic approach for the next few years
- We want to improve our public WiFi access across our estates to improve our digital offer for residents, visitors, and businesses. This will commence in the Town Hall and we are currently in negotiations with potential wifi providers who are looking at our buildings diagnostics to assess prices and options
- We will replace Lotus Notes Mail with Microsoft Outlook Mail, improving the functionality of our electronic mail and making it easier to work collaboratively with partners. This is due to commence this February
- We are moving away from creating new Lotus Notes databases, replacing our databases where appropriate with modern, intuitive cloud-based applications



**Workstream Lead
Angela Farrell**



Completed

- We have had a wonderful response to our first Employee survey for several years. 1,117 were returned providing 2,598 comments and suggestions
- The Workplace Health & Well-being Group Terms of Reference have been updated and strengthened to give more prominence and relevance to the group and its membership has been expanded
- We have agreed that workplace mental well-being will be a priority for this year and we have developed a Workplace Mental Well-being Strategy and Action Plan. We are currently progressing at pace with a number of key actions in the Action Plan, including rolling out a Workplace Mental Health First Aiders scheme which will commence in January 2020

Future Actions

- We will be collating feedback from Employee Survey and will be presenting the findings at the All Staff briefings in February
- We are committed to responding positively to what you told us in the Employee Survey and accordingly, based on your feedback, we will be producing an enhanced employment offer to be rolled out to all staff in Spring 2020
- We are going to re-introduce the Employee of the Month recommencing from February 2020. We are also looking at implementing an Annual Awards ceremony for staff,
- We are going to review our HR workflow processes, to see where we can streamline our processes and achieve efficiencies. We have already undertaken an initial scoping for a replacement HR system to replace the current system, complimented by an e-recruitment and onboarding module, and plans for more of a self serve approach for managers and employees.



**Workstream Lead
Steve Littler**

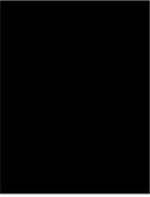


Completed

- We know that, for some staff, workplace accommodation is not at the standard that it should be. We have drafted a Strategic Asset Management Plan for employee accommodation, recognising that, in order to fully realise our plans for staff accommodation we need to change the way we work and move to working in a more flexible / agile way
- A short questionnaire has been issued by all managers to help us better understand office requirements
- We have met with managers at Hardshaw Brook and developed an Action Plan to improve accommodation at the site
- We have identified our agile champions to help change the culture and the perceptions of agile working
- Consultations on Earlestown and Gamble buildings have commenced

Future Actions

- We will finalise our Strategic Asset Management Plan for employee accommodation
- We will undertake feasibility studies to convert key sites to fully agile work environments
- As part of the wider Council Strategic approach to the delivery of services, and reflecting the consultation results of the Earlestown and Gamble consultations, we will review and modernize our reception areas
- We will set up a Task and Finish Group looking at Member and staff safety across the Council
- We will seek to get approval for the Hardshaw Brook improvements and move at pace to bring in much needed improvements to the site
- We will seek advertising opportunities at key sites across the borough to generate income and raise the profile of the borough



Workstream Lead Wayne Traynor



Completed

- We have worked with the Local Government Association to review the way we report on the Council's financial performance. As a result of this, and working with Members, we have now implemented a new style of financial report format which has been well received
- Accountants in the Business Support Units right across the Council's departments have successfully completed the challenging CIPFA Finance Business Partnership qualification which will assist us in adopting an enhanced approach when providing support to the leadership teams and service managers
- We have worked on the development of the Council's budget and provided support to Members to allow them to be in a position to agree and approve the budget for 20/21 at the Council meeting in March.
- We have identified the opportunities that enhanced levels of commercial activity and focus across the Council could bring and are planning to provide dedicated support to progress.

Future Actions

- We will continue to work on developing our Medium Term Financial Strategy, linked to our key priorities, as set out in our refreshed Council Plan
- We will be developing a Commercialisation Strategy and a capital investment strategy and approach, again linked to our key strategic priorities
- We are going to undertake a fundamental review of our financial instructions to review the language and financial thresholds, ensuring that they are modern, appropriate and support budget holders as they deliver their services
- We will continue to work to campaign for fairer funding from Central Government as we enter critical times for local government finances



Workstream Lead Mark Fisher



Completed

- We have been working hard on producing a new Council Plan setting out our key strategic priorities going forwards. Two facilitated workshops took place in November, one with the Senior Leadership Team and one with Ruling Group members with excellent engagement from participants
- We have reviewed the Service Plans in place across the Council. We now have Service Plans that reflect the key service areas of the Council. This important work also informs the Risk Register, the Business Continuity arrangements and the annual internal audit plan.
- A new style Policy Cabinet has been implemented, it is now well embedded and working well, strengthening relationships between senior officers and Members
- Members have been fully involved in agreeing and approving a new Senior Management structure and been involved in key stages of the appointment process

Future Actions

- We will agree the Council priorities going forwards and finalise the Council Plan to be rolled out to all staff in the next few months
- We will have a new Senior Management team in place by Spring 2020
- We will continue to embed Policy Cabinet and refine our decision-making processes
- We will review the Constitution to ensure that it is streamlined, modern and supports decision-making by the Council / Members
- We will adopt the modern.gov system to process manage the production of key reports to inform decision-making and ensure timely communication of key decisions between officers and Members
- We will review our Policy framework across the Council to ensure that it is fit for purpose



Workstream Lead Jayne Taylor



Completed

- A new intranet is in place (pending a longer-term solution); its functionality and content continues to improve
- A business partnership approach has now been developed to improve information sharing and understanding between the Communications Team and services across the council
- The All About Us weekly staff newsletter is now well established, more of our staff are engaged and providing us with content, and we are continuing to increase readership
- We have obtained the personal email addresses of 700 staff who are not on Council email and they now receive AllAboutUs through their personal email
- The Leader and Interim Chief Executive now issue regular communications which staff greatly appreciate
- A number of high profile marketing campaigns have been undertaken, in line with key Council priorities, for example the fostering and recruitment campaign in Children's Services

Future Actions

- We are refreshing the council brand to create a modern, fresh feel, and which will support and enhance our council values, vision and priorities. Initial brand concepts have been developed and will be presented to the Leader next month.
- We will develop a new one-year Communication Strategy setting out our approach to how we will support and promote the council priorities
- We will establish our approach to community engagement and develop a strategy which will set out how we will engage with our communities on future council priorities
- We are developing a Social Media Strategy which governs how we will use each channel, manage and administrate them, act as a guide for employees and monitor and report on performance.



Workstream Lead Caroline Barlow



Completed

- We want to improve the performance management culture of the Council, as really understanding how well we perform is the first stage in showing us where we need to improve. In consultation with the LGA, we are now producing a much improved Performance Monitoring Report, with an easy-to-read layout and greater functionality such as benchmarking data.
- We have produced a draft Health of the Organisation dashboard, pulling together information from a range of sources as diverse as sickness absence, accidents, internal audit reports and complaints, to present an overall picture of our organisational 'health'
- We looked at the existing complaints process of the Council, to find that we had in fact three separate Complaints policies. This is not putting the resident at the heart of what we do. Therefore, in line with the One Council ethos we have now completed an amended One Council Complaints Policy

Future Actions

- In order to fully understand how well we are delivering our services, we need access to a wide range of service data. Unfortunately we do not currently have modern systems that are intuitive and talk to each other, so instead we are going to implement a system tool, called Power BI, which will extract data across a range of systems. Proof of Concept has been completed and early adopter licences purchased; this will be rolled out over the next 12 months
- We will continue to strengthen the link between the Council Plan, Service Plans and individual services - 'the golden thread' - to ensure a consistent set of outcomes, aligned to our Council Plan and our One Council Vision.