

# Corporate Performance and Resources Committee

## Transformation Programme

### Progress Report

December 2023

#### 1. Purpose of report

- To consider an update which outlines progress in respect of the delivery of priorities/progress within the Council's Transformation Strategy and Work Programme.

#### 2. Background

- Following the Local Government elections in 2022, it was agreed to that this would be an opportune time to review the Authority's approach to transformation and ensure that the programme was fully aligned with the aims and objectives of the new Corporate Strategy.
- This would also look to build on the work of the Council's TIC Programme which had been the main vehicle for delivering an organisational support for transformation and change since 2012 and allow the Council to maximise the opportunities presented by the response to the Covid-19 pandemic to further transform and modernise our ways of working, especially using technology.
- The roll out of this new approach would be underpinned by the development and implementation of a Transformation Strategy. This is the first time that the Council that has produced a Transformation Strategy, and it is intended that this would provide the strategic framework to drive a programme of significant change and transformation across the organisation over the next 5 years.
- Given the significant financial challenges that the Council is likely to face in the short-term to medium term, the Transformation Programme will now have an even more important role to play in ensuring that we are able to radically transform what we do and enable the Council to meet the challenges of increasing demands and shrinking budgets.
- The Strategy is focussed on delivering on the following thematic priorities:
  - Efficiencies and Value for Money
  - Income and Commercialisation
  - Service Design & Improvement
  - Workforce
  - Workplace
  - Customers and Digital
  - Decarbonisation
  - Schools
- The Transformation Strategy was approved by Cabinet in February 2023.

### **3. Workstreams Progress**

- 8 Workstreams have been established to take forward the priorities identified within the Transformation Strategy. The table below provides an overview of progress in implementing these priorities and associated projects, together with some of the key outcomes achieved to date.

### **4. Programme Communications**

- A Communications Plan has been developed and this will provide opportunities to raise awareness of the wider Programme and specific projects, and for staff and members to contribute views and suggestions for future projects.
- Regular transformation related articles are published in staff news and the Programme's webpages have been further developed.
- A series of staff roadshows have been held during the Autumn which also provided staff with an opportunity to contribute their ideas for efficiencies and smarter ways of working. Additional events are due to be held during the Spring of 2024.

### **5. Learning and Development**

- The Transformation Programme has been aligned with the Council's Future Leaders Projects and 10 Future Leaders have all undertaken transformation related projects as part of their development programme.
- However, there is an opportunity for any member of staff to participate in, or lead on, a transformation project and it is now the intention that this is now formalised as part of a corporate talent management programme.

**CORPORATE PERFORMANCE AND RESOURCES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**  
**TRANSFORMATION PROGRAMME –PROJECTS UPDATE**  
**DECEMBER 2023**

<b>Workstream Priorities</b>	<b>Key Projects</b>	<b>Priorities/progress to date</b>
<p><b>1. Efficiencies and Value for Money</b></p> <p><i>Aim: To continue to deliver financial savings through efficiencies or cost reductions and smarter ways of working</i></p> <p><b>Strategic Lead:</b> Jonathan Morgan (Head of Housing and Public Protection)</p>	<p>Hold a series of budget sessions with Heads of Service to identify the potential for further financial savings at both a corporate and service level.</p>	<p>Budget sessions have been held with individual Heads of Service between February and the end of September 2023 in order to help support the identification of future efficiency savings for 2024/2025 budget setting process. A final report was presented to the CMT Budget Away Day in November. This identified a range of service specific opportunities which will be followed up with services over the course of the next year to review whether these have been translated into efficiency proposals. The exercise also identified a series of corporate themes which could provide opportunities to deliver efficiency savings/cost reductions or additional income in the medium to longer term.</p> <p>One of the key findings to emerge from the exercise to date is that a number of services are looking to the use of technology, especially AI, to help with the delivery of future budget savings. The Transformation Board has asked that plan be developed for the organisation which will aim to set out the costs/benefits of this approach. There will be an opportunity to ensure that this work is aligned with our approach to Workforce Planning and ensure that any change is delivered in a sustainable and planned way.</p>
	<p>Work with priority services to look at options to reduce various staffing costs, such as agency /overtime costs, through the implementation of more sustainable staffing structures.</p>	<p>An initial pilot exercise has been undertaken with Residential Services which is seeking to reduce the use of agency workers through making more effective use of overtime, increased use of casual workers and undertaking further work to reduce sickness levels. Similar work is now planned with the Children’s Service Division.</p>
	<p>Further develop the Routine Spend Dashboard and associated reports to help monitor and control areas of high spend/identify opportunities for potential savings at a cost level.</p>	<p>A Routine Spend Dashboard is used to help monitor/control and potentially reduce costs linked to a range of repetitive spend areas such as various staffing costs, staff travel, printing and postage. Summary reports are reported to the Transformation Board on a 6 monthly basis and departmental specific reports sent to Directors/Heads of Service. Specific pieces of work are also being undertaken in relation to staffing costs and also staff travel.</p>

	Seek to further strengthen the Council's management arrangements to support improvements in respect of value for money and quality in respect of services delivered by external providers.	The Workstream has identified the need to undertake a detailed review of the Council's Contract Management arrangements with the aim of achieving better value money for services received via external providers. This exercise is currently being scoped and is due to commence in January 2024.
<b>2. Income and Commercialisation</b>  <i>Aim: To develop a more commercial approach to the delivery of Council services with a view to increasing the level of income generated.</i>  <b>Strategic Lead:</b> Chris Moore (Director of Corporate Services)	<b>Commercialisation</b> - Develop a business case report that identifies the Council's ambitions and further opportunities for commercialisation and the type of capacity and skills required to deliver this agenda.	A business case to support an increased level of commercialisation has been progressed via a project undertaken via one of our Future Leaders and a final report was presented to the Workstream in October 2023. This work has helped inform the development of a draft Commercialisation Strategy and Delivery Plan. The Strategy will look to identify a range of opportunities to generate additional income which will help mitigate the impact of the ongoing budget challenges that the Council is likely to face in the coming years. These reports are due to be considered by CMT in January 2024.
	<b>Cost Recovery</b> - Develop a framework to support the implementation of a cost-recovery approach to the setting of Council fees and charges.	A cost recovery approach to the setting of fees and charges is currently being rolled out on a phased basis across Council services. This will look to ensure that, where appropriate, the service is recovering the full cost of providing a service when setting their fees and charges. A pilot exercise has been undertaken with the Council's Occupational Health services. A similar approach is now to be rolled out to parts of Housing and Public Protection Education and Place and Infrastructure.
	<b>Advertising &amp; Sponsorship</b> - Implement a programme which supports the roll out of advertising on Council roundabouts pilot to be completed & identify other opportunities for increasing income from advertising and sponsorship and ensure that a more coordinated approach is adopted in order to maximise the level of income generated.	A scheme to allow advertising on designated roundabouts throughout the County has been approved and is due to be rolled out shortly. This will aim to cover the costs of maintaining the roundabouts and generate additional income to support departmental budget pressures. Plans are also being developed to identify wider advertising and sponsorship opportunities across the Council which could also generate additional income.
	<b>Debt Recovery</b> - Further strengthen case management arrangements to	An 'Invest to Save' initiative has result in additional staffing resources being deployed within the Council's debt recovery functions to support increased recovery work. This will look to build on a previous TIC 'Invest to Save' project which generated recovered

	support the increased recovery of Council debt	debt of over £1.8m between 2016-2018. 4 additional temporary posts have been created within the Corporate/Social Care Debtors teams and Legal Services. The increased focus on this area and the adoption of a more proactive approach to the recovery of debt has helped recover/secure approximately £2m of debt since July this year.
<b>3. Workplace</b>	Seek opportunities to further rationalise the Council's office accommodation portfolio and consolidate staff in smaller number of buildings at key sites across the County	The Transformation Workplace workstream has been examining how we can rationalise our accommodation portfolio whilst modernising and improving the workspaces in our retained core buildings. Since the pandemic, most offices have been less than a third full, with staff increasingly needing different types of space to meet, work and collaborate. In the current financial climate building rationalisation is good a way to save money while protecting front line services. Reducing the Council's estate will also help save spends on utilities and contribute to us achieving our net zero carbon objectives.
<i>Aim: To exploit the opportunities presented by a move to hybrid working and to further rationalise the Council's accommodation portfolio and modernise and improve the working environment within the remaining core buildings.</i>		A successful rationalisation pilot has already taken place with Housing and Education & Children's Services (E&CS) staff in Llanelli. E&CS staff based in Llanelli are now working together on a single floor of Ty Elwyn with Housing staff from Eastgate based on another floor alongside Health staff in Ty Elwyn, Llanelli. A service led re-design of the workspace accommodated the teams across 2 floors with 315 staff comfortably working from 120 desks, with better meeting facilities and flexible working spaces created. This model can now be applied across the authority but will be adjusted to reflect the way that each service works as we recognise that not all teams work in the same way.
<i>Strategic Lead: Jake Morgan (Director of Communities)</i>		The number of staff based at Parc Dewi Sant in Carmarthen will be reduced over the next 12 months. Staff will be relocated to Spilman Street and County Hall. These changes will allow for the disposal of Parc Dewi Sant.  All Ammanford based staff will now be located at Ty Parc yr Hun.
	Continue to review the occupancy levels within core buildings by making effective use of data.	The Occupeye Resource Management and Booking system has been installed and this will allow for the on-going monitoring of meeting room/ office space.
	Develop an integrated travel and parking plan for retained buildings.	The consolidation of staff at a smaller number of sites in the key towns provides an opportunity to promote more sustainable options for both work related travel and travel to and from work. Further work will be undertaken in this area in the Autumn.

	Develop a plan for the sustainable functioning of depots from an operational and office point of view.	A review of depot facilities is currently being undertaken and is due to reported in the new year.
<b>4. Workforce</b>  <i>Aim: To oversee the development of a Workforce Strategy and delivery of key workforce priorities to enable the Council to become a more modern and responsive organisation and an 'Employer of Choice'.</i>  <b>Strategic Lead: Paul Thomas – ACE People Management</b>	Develop a new Workforce Strategy for the organisation which will set out the 'people' related aims and delivery priorities.	A Workforce Strategy has been developed and this will provide the strategic framework to help us address our key workforce priorities over the course of the next 5 years. This will also be supported by the development of a workforce data framework to help us evaluate the impact of this work. The Strategy is due to be considered by Cabinet in early 2024.  The Strategy will be complemented by the development of a data framework which will assist in the monitoring of the impact/outcomes achieved via the implementation of the Strategy.
	Complete the implementation of new Staff Recruitment process and system	A new Staff Recruitment system and process is currently being rolled out across the organisation on a phased basis.
	Investigate opportunities to reduce agency and other staffing costs (corporate & schools) including the potential to establish an in-house agency/supply function and /or staffing hub	A feasibility study has been undertaken to review the potential to set-up an in-house agency as a way of reducing agency costs and providing greater resilience within the staffing resource. This project, which has been undertaken as part of the Council's Future Leaders Programme, has recommended that an initial pilot project is undertaken within Residential Care services within the Communities Department before being potentially rolled out across other services.
	Implement Future Workforce Programme to encompass graduate, apprenticeship and work experience opportunities which are aligned to workforce planning priorities.	Our 'Future Workforce' initiative is also looking to promote a sustainable approach when responding to future workforce needs, by seeking to increase the number of apprenticeship, graduate and work experience opportunities. A framework has been developed to profile all the career/work experience opportunities available for young people.

		Discussions are being held with colleagues in ECS regarding potential to hold a series of Council Career fairs/events in schools in order to raise awareness of the range of career opportunities within the Council for young people.
<p><b>5. Service Design &amp; Improvement</b></p> <p><i>Aim: To provide for a more sustainable and creative approach to the review, remodelling and improvement of Council services.</i></p> <p><b>Strategic Lead: Gwyneth Ayres</b></p>	<p><b>Previous TIC Reviews – Improvement updates</b></p> <p>Review the position of previous TIC reviews currently still within the delivery/implementation stage and apply the appropriate sign off processes including the production of data to support on-going monitoring at a corporate level:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Planning Enforcement</li> <li>• Property Design</li> <li>• Pensions</li> <li>• Debtors</li> <li>• Risk Management</li> </ul>	<p><b><u>Planning Enforcement</u></b></p> <p>At the meeting of the Transformation Board in June, it was agreed that there was now sufficient confidence that improvements generated over the last 18 months would be sustained and therefore the Board agreed that this review and improvement work could now be formally signed off.</p> <p><b><u>Delivery Plan Updates – Pensions, Design, Debtors and Risk Management</u></b></p> <p>Regular updates continue to be submitted to the group and these updates now include key data to measure the impact of the change and improvement work being undertaken.</p>
	Undertake a service review of the Transport Maintenance Unit	<p>This project has been undertaken as part of the Future Leaders Programme and has involved a dialogue with a range of stakeholders including management/operational staff and client-side representatives.</p> <p>A number of recommendations have emerged which set out suggested practical interventions and areas for further review. These will now be incorporated within an action plan which will be reported to a future meeting of the Service Design and Improvement Workstream.</p>
	Undertake a review of the Member Enquiries system/process.	Elected Members of Carmarthenshire County Council make on average 5,000 enquiries per year via what is known as the DSU Member Enquiry Process. Following feedback from elected Members the Review of Member enquiries investigated whether the administration and procedures in place are working effectively and following extensive engagement with elected members and officers there were eight recommendations put

		forward within a report to the Democratic Services Committee on June 9 <sup>th</sup> . These recommendations were approved and are now being implemented.
	To undertake a review of the Carmarthenshire Integrated Community Equipment Service (CICES) in order that we can look at making the service more efficient and cost effective	This involves a comprehensive review of the management and operation of the Joint Equipment store has involved discussions with internal staff and wider stakeholders, reviewing unit's processes and analysing the type and frequency of requests received. A summary report is currently being produced which will then inform the production of an action to help progress the improvement areas identified during the review process.
	Develop a consistent methodology to support the undertaking of reviews and re-modelling within services.	Transformation Board requested that a map of the 'improvement journey' is undertaken which also clarifies the stage at which 'intervention' may be required. This was formally approved at a meeting of the Transformation Board is now profiled via the relevant Transformation Programme intranet site.
<p><b>6. Customers &amp; Digital</b></p> <p><i>Aim: To continue to make better use of technology to deliver smarter, efficient service processes and to deliver a better experience for customers.</i></p> <p><b>Strategic Lead:</b> Ainsley Williams (Director of Place and Infrastructure)</p>	Implement a programme to rationalise and automate a number of paper-based processes such as outgoing mail, timesheets, invoices and documents requiring hard copy signatures.	<p>The workstream is overseeing the implementation of an on-going programme of work which is seeking to rationalise and/or automate a number of paper-based processes, such as the processing of outgoing mail, timesheets, invoices and the printing of documents for signing.</p> <p>The use of electronic signatures and hybrid mail solutions is being rolled out across a number of services and this is already delivering a more cost-effective and productive way of working and also supports staff to work in a more hybrid way.</p> <p>Time-sheet automation has been rolled out in Building Cleaning, Schools Catering and parts of Home Care services and there are longer term plans for other operational services linked to IT system replacement (e.g. highways, cleansing).</p>
	Increase the number of enquires and requests dealt with at first point of contact	Work on-going in respect of waste related contacts, housing repairs and wider housing contacts. In respect of Housing Repairs, only first point of contact call coming via the Contact Centre. All follow-up calls now handled directly by the Housing repairs team. 100 calls a week for Heating related issues now going directly to the contractor.
	Implement RPA (Robotics Process Automation) & (AI) Artificial Intelligence.	The use of robotics technology is also being deployed to automate two back-office processes within the HR services. The first phase has already gone live. This project which is being funded via the Council's Digital Transformation fund will be used as



		'proof of concept in advance of the further potential use of AI/robotics within other services. The Transformation Board has agreed that the next process to be scoped for potential automation is the Free School Meals process and has authority requested the development of a prioritised plan for the rest of the organisation.
	Roll innovation network across key areas of the County as part of the All-Wales network	Deployment of the "Internet of Things" (IoT) innovation network across key areas of the County is 75% complete with a full target completion date of October. Collaborative pilot project with Swansea Council for bin monitoring and route optimisation – also to be completed by Autumn 2023.
<p><b>7. Decarbonisation &amp; Biodiversity</b></p> <p><i>Aim: To support the Council in delivering transformational change in support of key decarbonisation and biodiversity objectives and targets.</i></p> <p><i>Strategic Lead: Rhodri Griffiths (Head of Place and Sustainability)</i></p>	Develop a new Decarbonisation Strategy	<p>The main focus of current programme is the development of strategic/policy framework which will then provide the basis for the development of a Strategy and Delivery plan. Workshops have been held to engage directorates in the development of a new strategy.</p> <p>Work is on-going in support of the development of the Strategy with Strategy due for completion by April 2024.</p>
	Develop a carbon costing model.	This is the single Recommendation that the Council received from Audit Wales following publication of their report 'Public Sector Readiness for Net Zero Carbon by 2030' (July 2022). In the absence of national guidance on costing methodology, draft costing ESTIMATES produced for 3 April 2023 workshop. That estimation is however recognised to be subject to a wide degree of tolerance and we are working to produce more robust £ costings working with Welsh Government Energy Service and SBCR partners to develop a consistent approach.
	Develop biodiversity plan as required by the Environment Act	Development underway. Informed by workshop with the cross-party Climate Change and Nature Emergency Advisory Panel in March 2023.

<p><b>8. Schools</b></p> <p><i><b>Aim :</b> To assist schools in identifying cost reductions and better ways of working, and support the development of more sustainable school budgets and help protect front line provision.</i></p> <p><b>Strategic Lead :</b> Gareth Morgans (Director of Education and Children)</p>	<p>Carry out Expenditure / Routine Spend Benchmarking activities and share data with secondary schools to stimulate discussion and facilitate sharing of good practice in sustainable budget setting.</p>	<p>This is an ongoing annual exercise. New document to be completed in October for current financial year. Exploring mechanism to produce similar tool for primary schools using Routine Spend dashboard</p>
	<p>Develop and extend the use of Financial Efficiency templates with identified schools to support and challenge those in financial difficulty.</p>	<p>Process now formalised with a programme of identified visits and use of action plans and follow up monitoring and review visits. Ongoing work with other schools identified with plans to visit and support during remainder of current term. Matrices to identify strategies/recommendations/action plan/support actions generated from discussions. Agreed importance of review meeting for post action plan to offer support via 6 month follow up.</p> <p>The reports are considered by the Schools Transformation Workstream with an expectation that these are also shared with Governing Bodies. Common themes emerging from action plans to be shared with all schools.</p>
	<p>Review the impact of Schools' Property 'Handyvan' Service initiative to ensure cost effectiveness for schools and the LA and inform sustainable future development.</p>	<p>Service established and post evaluation exercise reported very positive outcomes for both schools and property maintenance. Discussions to be held on how service is to be rolled out to primary schools on a permanent basis. Place and Infrastructure department is giving consideration to the extension of the initiative to secondary schools.</p>
	<p>Investigate high expenditure areas in school budgets, e.g use of agency/supply and establish links with the wider corporate agenda.</p>	<p>Analysis has been undertaken to establish patterns and trends of agency spend in secondary schools. Data will be further explored to identify connections between agency spend and sickness management processes. Work to be extended to work with primary schools with high agency spend. A further investigation will look at high agency spend in relation to sickness absence in specialist ALN settings.</p>
	<p>Continue to identify savings opportunities for schools from corporate procurement contracts and communicate these to schools to ensure Best Value approaches to services and key expenditure areas</p>	<p>Ongoing work to continue raising awareness with schools in all areas.</p> <p>There is a need to carry out a separate piece of work to support schools through the planned WG reform of waste and recycling due for implementation in April 2024. Ltd. A position paper with proposals for a new costing and service delivery strategy has been prepared and will be presented to ECS DMT for consideration.</p>

