Transformation
Strategy
2022-2025

WELWYN HATFIELD
Working better, together

Introduction

We are a forward thinking and ambitious council. We began a modernisation programme in April 2020 which delivered over **£600k** of efficiencies, while providing investment in services to deliver change and improvement.

Once the programme ended in 2022 we undertook a senior management restructure and realignment of our services with the aim of delivering even better outcomes for residents and further efficiencies.

This restructure brought together a number of key services which will support the organisation in driving improvements and change, both for our customers and our workforce. These services include **IT and Digital, Customer Services, Legal, Procurement, Governance, Finance, HR, Communications**, and the creation of a central **Transformation Team**.

One of the council's five corporate priorities is to be a well-run council which puts our customer first. This **Transformation Strategy** is fundamental to the delivery of this objective and sets out how we will successfully transform our services over the next three years.

There are **five key aspects** to the programme which will not only deliver direct change and improvements to services but will also provide the tools and support for our workforce, and our new Senior Leadership Team, to successfully deliver more transformational change as we move through the programme.

We are excited to be starting on the next phase of our journey and for the benefits this new approach will bring to our customers.
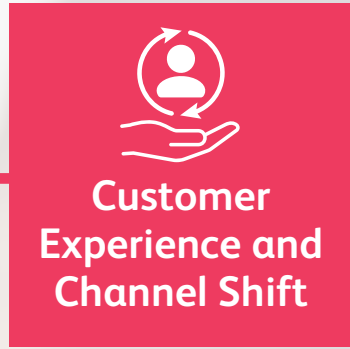
Tony Kingsbury
Leader of the Council

Ka Ng
Chief Executive

Richard Baker
Executive Director (Finance and Transformation)

What does transformation involve?

Customer Experience and Channel Shift

Technology and Automation

Culture and Workforce

Transformation

Project Management and Service Improvement

Data and Performance

Customer Experience and Channel Shift

Our Customer Service commitments set out how we aim to ensure the customer is at the heart of everything we do.

We will:

Make every contact count by:
- Adopting a 'right first time' approach
- Owning responsibility for every contact, connecting people quickly to the help they need
- Listening and explaining our decisions
- Ensuring there is a consistent approach to member enquiries and escalations

Provide accessible services by:
- Enabling our community to access more services online
- Providing welcoming and safe spaces in our reception
- Channeling contacts through a customer hub
- Making use of new technologies and self serve so we are accessible 24/7

Meet our Customer Service Standards by:
- Publishing our standards and applying them consistently
- Displaying our logo and contact information clearly in all our communication
- Being transparent

Use feedback to make improvements by:
- Saying sorry when things don't go right
- Listening to feedback and reviewing lessons learned
- Communicating changes and improvements

Over the last three years we have implemented a number of digital tools to enable us to review and redesign the way our services are delivered. These will allow us to shift the focus onto the customer experience and enable customers to self-serve where possible.

Now we have these tools in place, we are reviewing our key customer contacts so service requests and resolutions are always considered from the customer's perspective.

When redesigning services to enable channel shift and improve the customer experience, we will also consider those aspects of a service which impact on its delivery, and how customers can get the information they need, including:

- Reviewing the content of our website to ensure information is easy to access and understand
- Reviewing our back office policies and procedures to ensure we are delivering the services our residents need, and that this is done in the most efficient way
- Undertaking up-front triage of customer contact to enable a 'right first time' approach

During implementation of these digital tools, we also agreed our core service redesign principles, and these will be carried forward to this transformation strategy. These will be applied to every project the council undertakes as part of its customer experience and channel shift programme.

Customer Experience and Channel Shift Leads:
Kirsten Roberts and Ben Trueman

Customer Focus

- Services are designed to deliver customers **what they need in a way they value**
- Customers can access the services they need **in a way and at a time that suits them**
- **Language is consistent and easy** for customers to understand
- Customers are provided with **information about the progress of their query**

Right First Time

- Simple queries are dealt with at the **first point of contact**
- Customers are **clear about the information and evidence** they need to provide to services
- Customers are **not repeatedly contacted** for further information
- We ensure customer requests are **actioned across services**

Digital First

- Digital services are **accessible and easy to use**
- We **encourage customers to self-serve**
- There is a **single source of information** for customers and staff
- Services are **'digital in, digital out'**, removing paper by default
- Processes are **automated** wherever practicable
- Staff are able to focus on **delivering high-value activity**

Standardisation

- Customers experience the same **professional standard of service** across all channels
- We have a **common approach to customer journeys** (including use of triage and locality officers)
- Customers apply, report, book and pay in a **consistent** way
- A **standard set of technology** is used across services where practicable

Technology and Automation

We have been in a long-term contract for the provision of ICT services which ends in December 2022. This gives us an opportunity to fundamentally review how we deliver ICT to support change and improvement in services and improve our interactions with customers.

We decided to move to a new model of ICT, and the next three years will be critical in transitioning to this new model and driving change. We will:

Improve strategy direction and co-ordination by:
- Developing new strategies in consultation with staff and members that set the framework for digital technology
- Fully understanding our architecture and having a clear roadmap
- Empowering services to use IT as an enabler for change

Support the organisation by:
- Transitioning to a modern service model
- Providing tools that enable staff to spend less time on low value tasks and more time supporting our customers
- Having an adaptive approach as business needs change
- Understanding service needs and working with teams on how technology can drive change and improvement
- Develop automation tools to drive business efficiencies
- Identifying new and developing technology and proactively use these to improve services, such as robotic processing and artificial intelligence
- Giving officers access to the information they need, wherever they are working
- Ensuring that we provide a secure, resilient and compliant environment

Improve our applications estate by:
- Agreeing the design principles we need to make the right system choices in the future
- Having a clear applications roadmap (including cloud and SaaS)
- Having a consistent approach to applications support and development
- Ensuring we have an integrated application portfolio
- Improving central control and oversight of our application portfolio

Having a skilled team and flexible contracts by:
- Resourcing new roles and upskilling the team
- Being alert to new and developing technology
- Training and developing the team on new technologies
- Collaborating closely with services to ensure the team understand business need
- Engaging with suppliers on shorter term contracts
- Having outcome-based targets for contracts which can flex as markets evolve

Technology and Automation Lead:
Ben Trueman

Culture and Workforce

As we embark on our transformation journey, our values and culture will be critical to ensure successful change.

We aim to create a resilient, inclusive culture, where all employees work together to deliver the ambitions of the council. We will:

Drive cultural change by:
- Reviewing our corporate values and behaviours
- Ensuring every employee understands how their role fits with the council's objectives and how they can improve the way we do things
- Keeping employees up to date with regular communication about the council
- Continuing to develop our recruitment and onboarding process to set our expectations for employees early
- Enhancing the appraisal process
- Being open about the challenges facing the council
- Giving managers the tools and skills needed to manage staff and behaviours
- Reviewing structures to ensure they align to our priorities and new ways of working
- Reviewing our staff recognition scheme

Embrace new ways of working by:
- Communicating about, and involving staff in, our Transformation Strategy
- Undertaking regular communication with staff about change projects
- Consulting and involving staff on changes to services
- Seeking employee feedback
- Providing training and skills development for employees for new ways of working
- Reviewing organisational policies to ensure they promote rather than prevent agility
- Using role profiles to describe outcomes rather than being task driven

Ensure our staff have the skills they need by:
- Reviewing our approach to providing and monitoring learning and development
- Considering the use of graduate and management development schemes
- Considering the use of apprenticeships in all restructures
- Introducing a leadership development programme for managers
- Introducing an aspiring managers programme to nurture talent, including the use of mentoring and coaching
- Developing a culture of continuous learning
- Maximising the use of our apprenticeship levy

Improve staff recruitment and retention (many of the actions above will also directly impact on this area) by:
- Listening to, and acting on, staff feedback through staff surveys, exit interviews, the employee forum and other methods
- Reviewing our recruitment strategy
- Improving the data we hold and use when considering our workforce
- Offering practical advice and support on wellbeing initiatives
- Introducing 360-degree appraisals
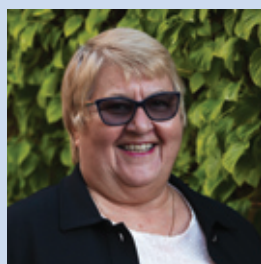
Culture and Workforce Lead: Janet Pilbeam

Project Management and Service Improvement

In 2022, we undertook a senior management restructure which included the realignment of services with the aims of delivering better outcomes for residents and driving business efficiency.

As we embed the management structure and realign teams, there will be efficiency and improvement projects identified for both the short term and medium term. We have a number of financial challenges in the coming years, including inflation pressures, utility costs, and continued funding reductions from central government.

As our budgets become tighter, we will need to find new ways of working. This may include fundamental changes to services, service commissioning, insourcing/outsourcing and partnership working.

It will be crucial in implementing these service changes that we have a strong project management framework in place, along with a clear programme to ensure corporate support is available, and that we maintain oversight to manage risks of non-delivery. We will:

Ensure projects are managed well by:
- Creating a clear and practical project management framework
- Developing our project management tools and systems
- Training and developing our workforce in project management
- Capturing lessons learned and using these to improve project management
- Clearly capturing decisions made

Monitor project delivery and performance by:
- Ensuring the correct tools are in place for tracking activities at task, project and programme level
- Setting clear objectives for projects and tracking against these
- Monitoring project level risks alongside operational and strategic risks

Ensure we deliver the best outcomes by:
- Identifying clear outcomes we want to achieve
- Consulting and/or engaging with services users on change
- Considering all options and delivery models, in consultation with providers of systems and services
- Designing services and change based around outcomes

Support teams to deliver projects by:
- Having a clear roadmap of change projects to ensure they are sufficiently resourced
- Providing specialist support to advise and support on project management, business case development, options appraisals and research
- Aligning our service-led change programme to our wider aims of this strategy
- Developing project tools to meet the needs of the business
- Providing quality assurance of business cases before decisions are made

Improve oversight and change adoption by:
- Improving management reporting
- Developing member reporting
- Having central records on projects and programmes
- Communicating change with our staff and residents

Lead for central aspects:
Kirsten Roberts

Data and Performance

As we transform we will need to ensure we make good decisions based on high quality data on services. We will also need to ensure that we have clear oversight of how services are delivering both before and after change.

Managers will need tools at their fingertips to allow them to assess the impact of change and to adapt as services evolve. We will:

Ensure we hold high quality data by:
- Understanding the data we hold and why we hold it
- Ensuring we have data that can inform business decisions
- Identifying and developing plans to close data gaps
- Ensuring we capture data at source
- Ensuring data is up to date and accessible
- Ensuring we gather the data for intended purposes
- Having controls in place to ensure ongoing data quality
- Reviewing our data retention policy and processes
- Making use of robust digital tools for the capture and management of data

Make sure we use data well by:
- Integrating for statistical and research purposes
- Understanding customer needs
- Identifying trends and customer demands to shape services
- Developing digital tools to allow for quick, simple and useful data summaries

Improve and manage service performance by:
- Ensuring we have identified key operational and strategic performance indicators
- Regularly reviewing and updating our performance measures as services change
- Introducing new management reporting as we deliver projects under our customer and channel shift programme
- Developing digital tools to allow for quick, simple and useful performance data
- Empowering managers to have access to real time performance data to allow swift corrective action when needed
- Setting stretched targets to improve performance
- Reporting regularly to the Senior Leadership Team and councillors on failing performance to allow for early intervention measures
- Undertaking quality assurance of data and performance measures
- Being transparent on our performance

Data and Performance Lead: Kirsten Roberts

Governance

We will ensure that appropriate oversight is in place to deliver the Transformation Strategy.

A Transformation Board will be set up to oversee actions arising from this strategy, along with projects identified as part of the service improvement strand of work. The Transformation Board will be made up of all members of SMT, along with the Transformation Manager and any other relevant officers as required, based on the projects being discussed.

There will be a lead for the following four strands of the strategy who will develop the detailed action plans, and present updates to the Transformation Board on the progress against our roadmap and action plan. These leads will determine if and when sub-groups will be required. The leads will also present reports on any key decisions required. The leads are:

- **Customer Experience and Channel Shift** – Assistant Director (Customer and Transformation)
- **Technology and Automation** – Assistant Director (ICT and Digital)
- **Culture and Workforce** – Human Resources Manager
- **Data and Performance** – Assistant Director (Customer and Transformation)

For the final strand of the strategy, Project Management and Service Improvement, the Transformation Manager will develop a framework for project management and present this back to the Transformation Board. Members of SMT will each take responsibility for their own services, presenting options and providing updates on project delivery to the Transformation Board.

Communications

Staff Communications
We will provide regular updates to all staff on the aims, progress and outcomes of this strategy, as a minimum on a monthly basis.

Where services are going through change, for example with channel shift and the development of new online forms, more frequent targeted communications will be used. This will include opportunities for staff feedback and user testing.

We will make use of user stories to highlight successful projects and the positive impacts they have had on staff and customers.

Member Communications
We will provide a monthly update on our transformation journey through our monthly member bulletin.
A monthly briefing will be provided to the Leader of the Council, summarising updates and outcomes from the Transformation Board.

We will provide an annual update on delivery of this strategy to Cabinet.

For further information contact:

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