

additional papers 1

Council

Monday 22nd July
2013
7.00 pm

Council Chamber
Town Hall
Redditch



www.redditchbc.gov.uk

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Welcome to today's meeting.

Guidance for the Public

Agenda Papers

The **Agenda List** at the front of the Agenda summarises the issues to be discussed and is followed by the Officers' full supporting **Reports**.

Chair

The Chair is responsible for the proper conduct of the meeting. Generally to one side of the Chair is the Committee Support Officer who gives advice on the proper conduct of the meeting and ensures that the debate and the decisions are properly recorded. On the Chair's other side are the relevant Council Officers. The Councillors ("Members") of the Committee occupy the remaining seats around the table.

Running Order

Items will normally be taken in the order printed but, in particular circumstances, the Chair may agree to vary the order.

Refreshments : tea, coffee and water are normally available at meetings - please serve yourself.

Decisions

Decisions at the meeting will be taken by the **Councillors** who are the democratically elected representatives. They are advised by **Officers** who are paid professionals and do not have a vote.

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Do Not re-enter the building until told to do so.

The emergency Assembly Area is on Walter Stranz Square.



Council

22nd July 2013

7.00 pm

Council Chamber Town Hall

8. Executive Committee

To receive the minutes and consider the recommendations and/or referrals from the following meetings of the Executive Committee:

11th June 2013

Matters requiring the Council's consideration include:

- Restructure Enabling Heads of Service.

(Consultation responses in respect of the Restructure of the Enabling Heads of Service report attached. Members are advised that because of the timescales involved in the consultation process it is liable that they may be recommended to defer this item, although the documentation to date is included for completeness.)

9th July 2013

Matters requiring the Council's consideration include:

- Council Plan.

(Decision and final draft of the Council Plan as intended for general publication attached.)

(Minutes circulated in Minute Book 2 – 2013/14)

Comments on Finance and Resources Senior Management Service Review/Restructure

Enabling Heads of Service – Aim of Review

Key decisions need to be based on data.

The report states that there are 2 main aims to the review. Firstly to **reduce the costs** associated with enabling and adding value to the organisation.

Can you 1) set out the split between create value, add value and enable for each organisation, and 2) explain what the perceived appropriate ratios are for these costs and on what basis these ratios have been deemed to be appropriate.

The current cost of the service is quoted to be £425k, reducing to £348k. The Business Case quotes savings of £77k per annum with potential redundancy/retirement cost of between £30k and £210k. **In practice if the actual costs of redundancy are £210k due to the costs associated with the individual made redundant then there would be an additional cost of £57k (£28.5k per Council) in 2013/14 and savings of just £37.5k (£18.75k per Council) in 2014/15 and 2015/16. The full savings per annum quoted of £77k per annum would not be achieved until 2016/17.** This assumes that the costs associated with actuarial strain are met over a three year period.

Why have the potential costs associated with this Business Case not been clearly set for members when there could be an additional budget pressure of between £57k and £171k in the current financial year?

In the current financial climate how can this be justified?

The second stated aim of the review is **'link the proposed structure with the Strategic Purposes of the Council which have been developed following evidence of customer demand'**. The strategic purpose 'help me to be financially independent' includes the issue for the citizen 'somewhere affordable to live'. This element is missing from the proposed structure. The review is too narrow in its focus with regards to the evidence arising from customer demand. The Housing Options Intervention has highlighted that the key services required to be present to meet customer facing demand within the Customer Service Centre are Housing Options and the Benefits and Revenues Services in addition to a reception service provided by the CSAs and the Cash Office.

The number of Essential Living Fund applications has been included as a measure for the above strategic purpose. The customers for this service mainly present to either the Benefits for Housing Options Service.

Why has Housing Options been excluded from consideration within this review when the Intervention and strategic purpose point to a clear relationship in terms of the customer?

Enabling the Financial Management of the Organisation

The Business Case states that there is a need to reassess the costs associated with the enabling of the financial management of the organisation it is also important to have a strong and transparent link between the s151 and Deputy s151 officer to facilitate 'proactive and timely decision making' and the exchange of professional advice and support. The change would 'ensure a consistent approach is made when dealing with financial legislative issues'. This implies that the current structure does not.

Can you please explain with examples 1) how the current structure hampers proactive and timely decision making, and 2) how the current structure has led to an inconsistent approach when dealing with financial legislative issues.

The transfer of client management for Internal Audit to the Financial Services Manager is merely a paper exercise as this role is in practice undertaken by the Executive Director Finance & Corporate Resources.

Enabling the Transformation and Organisational Change of the Organisation

This section of the Business Case illustrates the need for HR & OD to be engaged in the Transformation journey that the organisations are on and the future support and development of staff but it fails to explain the benefits of the service reporting to the Head of Business Transformation alongside the IT Section and the Policy and Performance Team.

Help me to become Financially Independent & Enabling the Customer

The Business Case is silent on the link to housing debt when considering an individual's indebtedness. In this respect I consider that this restructure is premature. The Revenues Service needs to encompass the collection of housing rents in order to deal effectively with an individual's indebtedness. The work in Revenues has already identified that housing costs (rent, mortgage and council tax) impact significantly on those who struggle financially. We need to consider a customer's level of indebtedness as one Council (be that Redditch or Bromsgrove) and not from individual services. This is increasingly important with the impact of Welfare Reform, the move to Universal Credit and the move from paying council tax benefit to a council tax discount.

The measures for this strategic purpose include the number of tenants in rent arrears (all arrears).

It states in the Business Case that there has been 'a change within the customer service department, ensuring that experts deliver a quality service'.

The service provided by the CSAs has reduced by more than 70% with many services now dealing directly with their customer directly either face to face or via the telephone. This has itself impacted on the role of the Head of Customer Services. The report is silent on the significant impact that this shift has had on the role of the Head of Customer Services.

Why is the Business Case silent on the impact that this significant change in meeting customer demand has had on the role of the Head of Customer Services?

Other comments

The job descriptions and person specifications (JDs & PSs) are all headed up 'Bromsgrove District Council' with no mention of Redditch Borough Council. Is this right?

The 'responsible for' sections of the JDs & PSs are inconsistent. One refers to post titles, one to services and one to divisions of a service. Should this be consistent at least at the same level in the organisation?

The involvement in this review process of the 4th Tier Managers that directly report to the Heads of Service affected by this review has been limited to the circulation of the current and proposed structure charts. In view of the fact that one of these Heads of Service could be on notice of redundancy by the end of July/beginning of August I consider this to be inadequate. Apart from the fact that they should be fully aware of what is being proposed as it will impact on them they could have had very valid contributions to make to the consultation process.

RESPONSE RE COMMENTS ON FINANCE AND RESOURCES SENIOR MANAGEMENT SERVICE REVIEW/ RESTRUCTURE

- 1) Allocation of Costs associated with Create Value, Add Value and Enable. The costs have been allocated based on a judgement as to whether the posts deliver functions that are front line (Create Value) , Supervisory (Add Value – one removed from the delivery of front line) or Support (Enabling). The split we presently have, accepting that posts may have altered slightly which may make a minor impact on the % allocation is :

TOTAL FOR BDC - CREATE / ADD / ENABLE				
	CORE	SUPPORT	TOTAL	%
CREATE VALUE	2,324,848	277,134	2,601,982	38%
ADD VALUE	988,207	438,774	1,426,981	21%
ENABLE	903,686	1,827,394	2,731,081	40%
TOTAL	4,216,741	2,543,302	6,760,043	

TOTAL FOR RBC - CREATE / ADD / ENABLE				
	CORE	SUPPORT	TOTAL	%
CREATE VALUE	4,927,829	455,523	5,383,353	43%
ADD VALUE	2,949,197	324,767	3,273,964	26%
ENABLE	1,311,750	2,413,699	3,725,449	30%
TOTAL	9,188,777	3,193,989	12,382,765	

- 2) Costs associated with the proposed Business Case :

The maximum costs associated with the proposed structure are approximately £195k following the final pension estimate and redundancy calculation from the County Council. Based on any pension strain payable over a 3 year period and with the unsuccessful candidate being made redundant from 31st October, the costs would be :

2013/14 – maximum £63k (cost of redundancy offset by savings from deleted post). The maximum cost for each Council is £31.5k and the Bromsgrove cost will be funded from the reserve currently available for restructures. The potential cost at Redditch will be met from further savings from transformational activity across the Council.

2014/15 – minimum net saving to Redditch £11k, saving to Bromsgrove £38.5k assuming that the costs for Bromsgrove are met from reserves

2015/16 – minimum net saving to Redditch £11k, saving to Bromsgrove £38.5k

2016/17 – saving to both Councils of £38.5k (total of £77k realised)

It is accepted that despite the current financial climate it is important to develop structures that meet the strategic purposes and deliver longer term savings.

- 3) There are 2 separate Strategic Purposes; Help me be financially independent and Help me Find somewhere to live in my locality. It is agreed that within the strategic purpose relating to financial independence there are a number of measures that directly link to housing but

as the intervention in housing is still under review and in pilot form is proposed that the new post is responsible for the leading the team and developing the relationship with the housing services to ensure that the measures are in place to support the customer and improve their financial independence and skills and education (also part of this strategic purpose).

- 4) Financial Management ; the current structure does not have a direct link between S151 Officer and the Deputy post. With the changing environment in financial planning it is important to not have the link between these posts diluted. Over the last 12 months it is apparent that Heads of Service tend to liaise with either S151 or Deputy and this can lead to confusion if the Head of Finance has to provide advice too. It is my opinion as S151 that the proposed approach will provide a more focused structure in the financial management of the organisation combined with reducing costs associated with enabling the Councils.
- 5) HR & OD – the report clearly explains the rationale for moving HR&OD to the Head of Transformation. This is to ensure that the staff going through change have the support and direction to manage the changes they face and that this support is led by the Head of Service responsible for the transformation.
- 6) Customer Service : the Head of Customer Service post is deleted in the proposed structure and this reflects the changes to the role and the need to link the strategic purpose to the structure. The link to Housing debt is important and it is anticipated that this will continue to be developed in the future.
- 7) This is a genuine mistake and the Job Descriptions should be headed across the 2 organisations and I apologise that this was not picked up. Is there an issue that you would raise whereby the inconsistencies you have pointed out would affect the substantive position in respect of the potential redundancy.
- 8) In relation to wider consultation. I have directly consulted with those potentially at risk of redundancy and the recognised trade unions, and in addition I have circulated the proposed structure to relevant 4th tier managers as I felt this was appropriate.

- 1. The majority of customer demand is now being met within service areas, so do we really need separate customer service?**

The proposal takes account of the reducing role of the Customer Service functions in dealing with customer demand but aims to maintain a corporate customer service lead.

- 2. As we understand it the main footfall and customer demand is for housing and relevant benefits, this is being met with locality work and through the relevant benefit and revenues services. Surely the residual customer service demand can therefore also be added to the existing structures in operation or the transformation work happening in other areas , i.e environmental services ?**

As detailed above, the proposal takes account of the reducing role of the Customer Service functions in dealing with customer demand but aims to maintain a corporate customer service lead. In addition the proposal recognises the strong links between customer service and provision of financial support. The proposal is not for a standalone customer service function but an enhanced service to the customers of Redditch and Bromsgrove.

- 3. Customer access is as critical to transformation as H R so why is it not going to the same site/location as H R?**

The Head of Customer Access and Financial Support will manage the front facing, customer access and support and advice. The HR & OD will transfer to the Head of Transformation as this relates to the internal support for our staff in dealing with change and the new ways of working.

- 4. Is there any evidence to suggest that the workload or the need will reduce in any other area than Customer Services (directly)**

The current proposal relates solely to the Heads that support the organisations in an enabling way. The evidence to support any changes in other departments is not as developed as that within the enabling services.

- 5. Given the current challenges major organisational challenges, i.e transformation, budget cuts, welfare reform etc can the proposed structure cope with this?**

Whilst it is accepted that there will be a reduction in posts, the proposals will support the transformation and welfare changes within a systems thinking and efficient framework.

- 6. Financial modelling and planning is critical yet it appears that you are attempting to reduce the expertise and knowledge**

The financial modelling of the organisations will be undertaken by the finance team and supported by the S151 officer as at present. Service managers have ownership of their financial position and projections and therefore it is anticipated that the potential changes and required training will give more financial knowledge to the service manager.

7. Can you explain the reasons that legal and democratic services are left untouched?

As is clearly laid out in the report the legal and democratic services functions have been reviewed against “Enabling Governance of the Organisation” and it is recommended that the current responsibilities are appropriate for the current role.

8. How will having less people looking at issues the organisation faces impact on the authority?

There is a commitment that the costs associated within the enabling side of the organisations need to reduce and that the Councils need to ensure that funds are available for posts that create value to our customers. The capacity that will remain within the structure will ensure that future impacts on the Councils will be reported and assessed.

9. Strong links already exist between the Dep 151 Officer and statutory 151 officer why was this not addressed in the first review?

The changes over the last few years in Government funding has resulted in the proposal to directly link the 2 posts.

10. Where is the evidence that the customer service need has remained the same? (help me become financially independent)

The proposed structure develops customer service as a skill for advisors rather than being a standalone provision.

11. We see the role of customer services as an integral part of peoples roles in all services and therefore more of a training and support element sitting in H R and the CSA’s incorporated as above.

As previously mentioned the proposed structure will reflect the need for customer skills across the organisations. As with all structures within a systems thinking environment there will be a need to further review as the redesigned service delivers customer needs.

12. There appears to be no link with housing supported in this review, currently there are very strong links between the housing service and revenues and benefits, how will this be addressed?

It is accepted that there are strong links between the services but at present the interventions are still being developed / piloted (eg need for a separate reception). At present the proposed structure reviews the services provided by the enabling Heads of Service.

13. Can you explain please as the expertise has been rolled out to departments / sections what role the customer service advisors will involve expertise? Surely the expertise will be in the departments from the benefits advisors who possess great customer service skills?

It can already been seen that a different type of customer care professional is required to both on the phone and face to face to appropriate establish the correct expert to be pulled

to support the customer. This role is developing as we learn through transformations but I do not see it as simply a receptionist or telephonist role but one which can work across purposes.

14. Is there evidence that customer service advisors are still giving advice / information to customers?

The CSA's still provide advice and information on many services including those currently in intervention when necessary, if customers are not prepared to wait, at the One Stop Shops (in Redditch) or at weekends. It is recognised that that this a reducing role and a subsequent review of the Customer Service team will take place once there is certainty about what is required.

CONSULTATION FEEDBACK

The only concern is with the 'fit' of the asset management element with the customer facing leadership role of Head of Customer Access and Financial Support . This is because I see the property element to be more of an enabling one which would fit better with other internal support or enabling functions. I understand that the restructure is at HOS level only but I believe that there is a gap in the overall structure as there is no 4th tier operational manager to support asset management. My concern is that this could undermine the ability of the new role to focus on meeting the key strategic purpose.

In addition as the facilities manager is responsible for the caretakers, and the cleaners and caretakers work is closely aligned, would it not make sense to shift responsible for the basic facility management of the Town Hall to this post as part of this review whilst leaving the bigger asset management with the HOCA&FS role in the short term.

Response:

In developing the current proposed structure a review has been undertaken to assess the capacity in relation to the property services functions. Following detailed discussions with County Council it is recognised that their support to the asset management service, as included in the current Service agreement they have with both Councils, will address the asset management requirements across both Councils. As regards the Town Hall facilities management it is currently assessed that this fits at the current time with the customer access post as this provides front line access to our community at Redditch

1. A) **The current post of Head of Resources is being arbitrarily carved up to fit in Customer Services.**

There is nothing to suggest that this is the case. Rather the proposal brings together elements of both roles into one.

- B) **Why isn't Customer Services being reviewed in its entirety? It is already evident that the role of CSAs has changed, by default this must mean that other roles within and managing this service have , and will continue to change and minimise in their need . this means we are duty bound to ask Is there a role for a Head of Customer Services at all?**

The Head of Resources and Head of Customer Services posts are being deleted and a new role created that will support our customers when they present for financial support and advice. There is a need to ensure one of the senior roles within the organisations provides a strategic and coordinated approach to customer care.

2. **What is the rationale for moving service areas across directorates (HR and OD service) and where is the consultation? Has the relocation of HR & OD been fully explored? Is the proposed site the most appropriate or logical?**

The transfer of the HR & OD service to transformation will ensure that as systems thinking and change continues within the organisations that staff are supported to manage the change and have appropriate skills and training to deliver the newly designed services. The link between the transformation and HR&OD will continue to address the support needed by staff in the future. In relation to the consultation, I have directly consulted with those potentially at risk of redundancy and the recognised trade unions, and in addition I have circulated the proposed structure to relevant 4th tier managers as I felt this was appropriate.

3. **Why are two current Heads of Service being summarily moved to other disciplines? Are they qualified in these fields? In particular, how can a customer orientated post suddenly cover financial requirements without any qualifications?**

The new HOS role has responsibility for the overview of financial support to the customer through the benefits and revenues systems and not technical financial management and therefore financial qualifications are not required. In addition the suitability of whoever is appointed to the new role will be rigorously tested as part of the selection process.

4. **Why is the Financial Services Manager not at risk, when there are actually two members of staff potentially able to apply for the post, according to the Council's policy and practice? The current HoS should be able to cascade down to that post, why is this not written in to or acknowledged in the review?**

This issue has been considered and it is felt that the current proposed approach is consistent with that taken by the Councils in previous reviews and;

- it has not been past practice or custom to widen (or 'cascade') the redundancy pool further down the structure
- the proposed restructuring is concerned with reducing the number of enabling Head of Service posts, rather than lower level posts
- in the circumstances, it would be unreasonable to extend the redundancy pool to include a permanent employee whose role is not fundamentally changed or affected by the proposed restructuring

5. Can a reduction in workload be demonstrated which justifies the loss of the major financial post within both Councils? Would it be more cost effective to lose a Director?

As is the case in all service reviews and restructures the workload has been assessed to ensure that the capacity across the organisations can meet the demand. The proposed structure is not about responding to reduced workload but instead seeks to achieve greater support to the strategic purposes. In addition providing efficiencies across the services and reducing costs of enabling services to protect those posts that create value to the residents. As you are aware both Councils continually review their service provision to ensure that the management arrangements supporting the services are appropriate regardless of what level.

6. Why are timescales so tight? We understand that the Financial Services Manager has already been advised by letter that her new post will commence on 1st August, which was initially before any interviews, and in any event before consultation had finished. How can this be? This demonstrates that consultation is a farce and decisions are made without due consideration.

It is clearly stated in the letter that the appointment is conditional upon the outcome of the consultation exercise and that everything could yet change in the light of the Councils' consideration of the representations made by Unison and others. No changes to posts were to be implemented before the end of consultation or consideration by Members. For clarification the consultation period ended on Friday 12th July.

7. Transformation, which should be a common sense, routine part of the role of any good manager in keeping their service on target, is an area of high expenditure. Why is this not being reviewed? Should it be a separate service in perpetuity? And at what cost? Is there a requirement for a Head of Transformation at all?

The Council continues to address and realign financial pressures where possible. The Head of Transformation also manages the ICT and performance teams. The initial cost of transformation has helped develop redesigned systems and the transformational team will continue to support the delivery of savings to meet future financial pressures.

8. Would it not be better to look at services holistically? This review seems to single out an individual rather than legitimately target a service in need of change that is being expedited by other departments entering into, or currently going through "transformation" .

The review has not singled out an individual, it has objectively reviewed the structures that relate to those Heads of Service who are responsible for enabling services across the

organisations and proposed a revised structure to support one of the strategic purposes of the Councils.

- 9. What about the outstanding VR/flexible retirements within Finance? Surely a fuller review of this area is merited and indeed warranted in terms of financial savings in redundancy or pension costs. Currently, for one deferred voluntary redundancy the cost would be approximately £21,500 and no other associated costs. The flexible retirement in question has been agreed, therefore there is no cost, but a saving. Why cannot this post and the duties taken out of the flexible retirement post be combined to create a new post, then the current Financial Services Manager could cascade to that post, utilising natural wastage, limiting cost implications, and maintaining savings, continuity of service and, crucially, jobs, with a salary saving dependent upon the salary appointed at? When will the current proposals realise savings, given the cost of the current proposed redundancy? Our proposal could potentially save up to 90% of those costs. (please see detail below)**

It is accepted that there is a potential significant cost associated with one of the postholders currently at risk. The requests for voluntary redundancies was made to mitigate the impact of compulsory redundancies from service reviews required to meet the shortfalls in funding that both Councils have within the medium term financial plans. The revised Unison proposal is considered below however it is important to recognise that the current level of voluntary redundancy requests do not meet the required level of savings and therefore the current proposal together with the agreement of the voluntary redundancy would deliver increased savings.

- 10. The costing's of the existing and proposed arrangements are not clear, either financially or in terms of posts. Can we have a breakdown?**

Current Structure :

Head of Finance and Resources	£93k
Head of Customer Services	£80k
Head of Transformation	£93k
Head of Legal and Democratic Services	£93k
Financial Services Manager	£66k
TOTAL CURRENT COST	£425k

New Structure

Head of Customer Access and Financial Support	£93k
Head of Transformation and Organisational Change	£93k
Head of Legal and Democratic Services	£93k
Financial Services Manager	£69k
REVISED COST	£348k

NET SAVINGS £77k to be shared between the 2 Councils

REVISED PROPOSALS FROM UNISON

Detailed below are the current proposals from Management and the UNISON proposal

Management Proposal for New Structure (not including HR and OD proposed to sit under transformation H of S)

Current cost £425k

Cost £348k

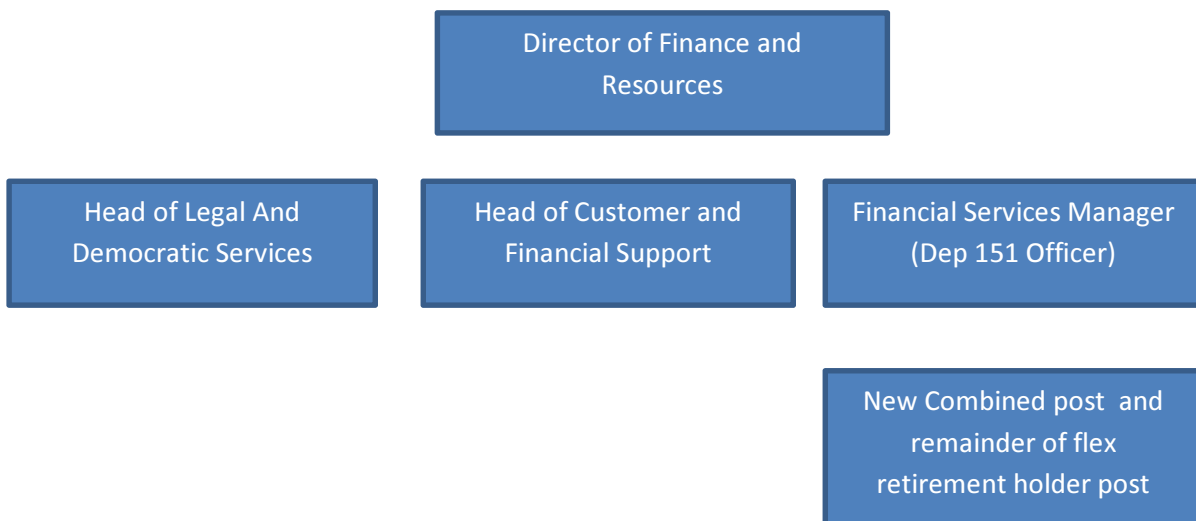
Saving £77k

The 2 posts that could be combined , currently cost approximately **£78k** per year bringing the proposed service to a cost of **£426k (current service cost of £503k)**

Redundancy costs vary between **£30k** and **£221k !**



Union Proposal creating a new combination post from the Deferred VR Request and the 2 days from the Flexible Retirement(agreed) request



Cost for 3 director reporting posts **£348k** (as in report / business case for review) plus the cost of a new combined post (reporting to FSM Post) at a salary of **£47k** (approx.) and the remainder of pay for the flex retirement post holder (**£25k**) totals **£420k**, **£6k** less per annum than the management proposal, plus the **£77k** savings generated as in the business case report totals **£83k** savings per year. Redundancy costs for this proposal **£21,500k** a proposed saving on redundancy costs of between **£8.5k** and **£199,500k!**

This is just the monetary savings (hugely important I know) but staff morale and the utilisation of natural wastage (already agreed and wanted) would go such a long way to ensuring people do not feel targeted as individuals, it will make people sit up and see that the common sense attitude exists and that we do look for ways forward without imposing situations onto staff and that we only impose when there is no other option available.

If The current Head of Resources was successful in securing the new Head of Service role then Sam Morgan could slot into the FSM role if the current Head of Customer Services was not able to be ring fenced for that post and the combined post could be recruited to internally or externally?

We would welcome your thoughts, comments and if this option can be looked at and if not we would like the reasons why it can not be looked at as an option..

Response:

It is important to consider when establishing a new post the definition of the roles and responsibilities that the post will undertake. Following the review of the structures within the enabling service as part of the report there is no current evidence to demonstrate that a new post is required at this level. In particular with the commitment to reduce enabling costs this would not be supported by the additional post being created. The proposed structure aims to support the needs of the organisation with clarity of the posts required and to align the resources to where the posts are creating most value to the community.

Whilst the potential costs may be deemed as being significant the level of savings will be realised to meet these costs in future years. In addition if the comparison with the proposed structure and the UNISON proposal is based on an equal assessment of the costs then the proposed structure would deliver £97k of savings against the UNISON proposal of £83k.

We look forward to a written response to our questions.

**Laney Walsh
Branch Secretary
Redditch & Bromsgrove Branch UNISON**

11 July 2013

REDDITCH BOROUGH COUNCIL

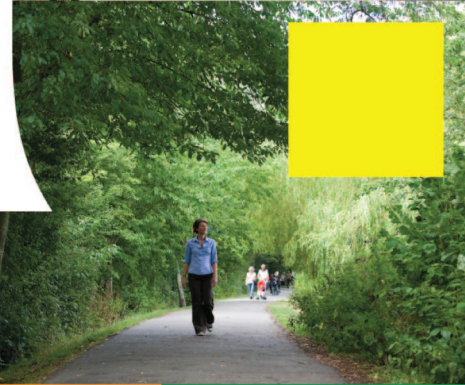
COUNCIL

22nd July 2013

82. COUNCIL PLAN

RECOMMENDED that

subject to the amendments in the preamble [detailed in the minutes of the Executive Committee meeting held on 9th July 2013], the Council Plan attached at Appendix 1 to the report be approved.



REDDITCH

July 2013

Redditch Council Plan

REDDITCH BOROUGH COUNCIL

making difference

www.redditchbc.gov.uk

Welcome to the Redditch Borough Council Plan.

I am proud to welcome you to the new Redditch Borough Council Plan where I can share with you the direction and determination of the Council to provide excellent services that the residents of Redditch deserve. We all have great ambition and drive to make our Borough one you are proud to be part of.

Our Council Plan shows how we are changing the way we deliver our services and the areas we will focus on in the future. This will ensure that the Council deals with the unprecedented cuts in our funding in a way that protects the services that really matter to you.

We have been carrying out a root and branch study of how all our services work, from your perspective, not the Council's.

Through studying in detail what we do, we know that we can improve if we enable our dedicated staff to help you in a more flexible way.

We have taken steps to remove costly red tape and waste from our services and to focus on those things that really matter to you.

The evidence so far shows that prevention is better than cure, and better value for money too. So we want to get to the root causes of the issues in our communities, not just deal with the symptoms.

By working closely with our communities we can identify the underlying reasons for the problems and issues you face, supporting you at a local level to ensure that these are resolved.

Also, by working closely with our partners in the public, private and voluntary sector, we can make sure your needs are at the heart of everything we do.

This change process is still in its early stages. We still have a lot of work to do, but we have seen some very positive results so far.

We have already started providing innovative support at a local level in Winyates.

Residents have praised the team for their level of commitment and drive to understand the nature of problems and to help resolve them.

You will see more examples of the different ways we are working over the next few pages.

Our Council Plan is simple and focuses on what really matters; delivering services which meet the needs of our residents.

Through our six strategic purposes we are changing the focus of our organisation away from individual services to a more joined-up approach.

It is only by truly understanding the needs of our residents, that we can deliver the services which meet those needs. The challenges ahead will be tough and difficult choices will be faced.

We will meet them with hard work and commitment, and we will keep on innovating for Redditch.



Cllr Hartnett
Leader of Redditch Borough
Council

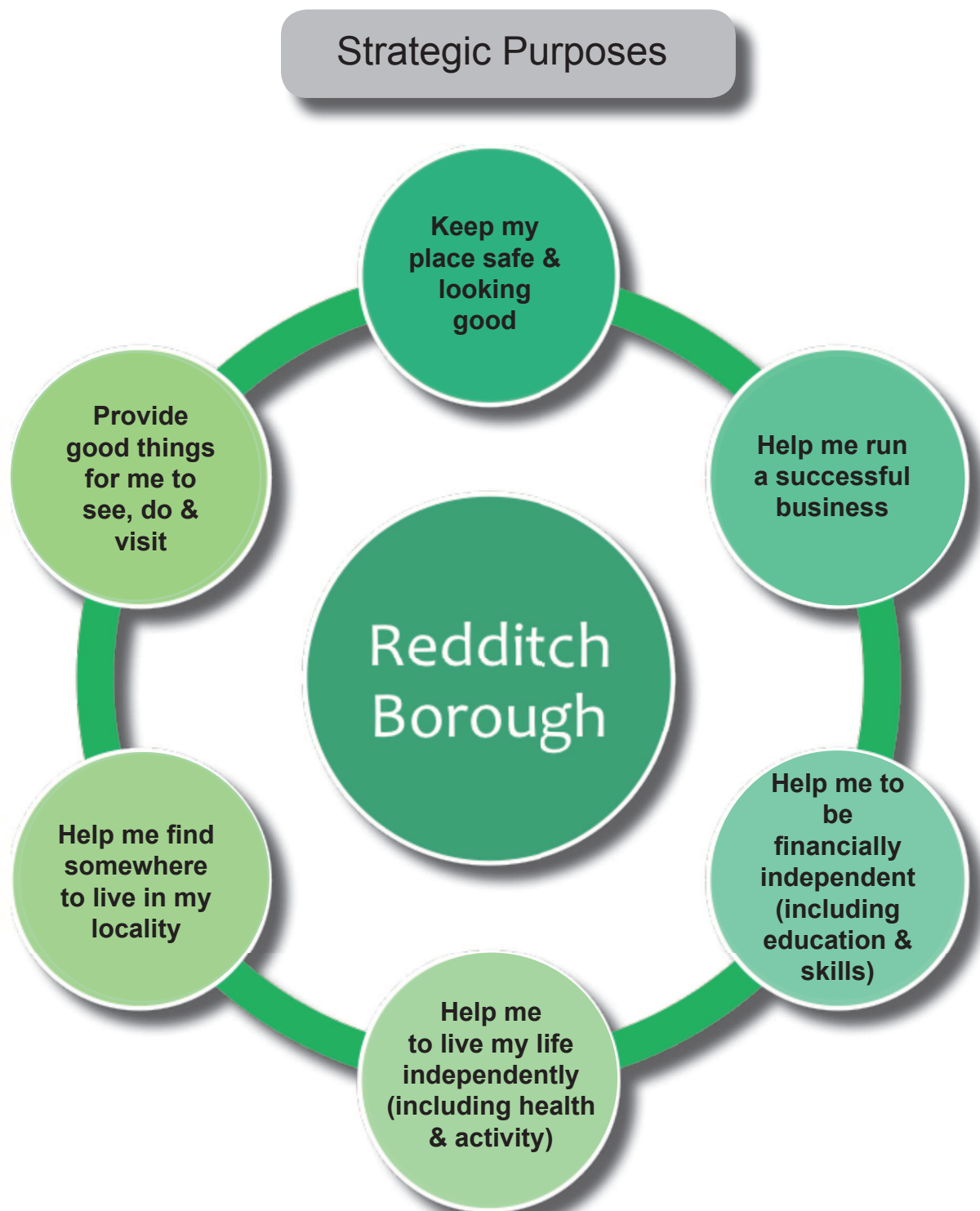


The Borough of Redditch is situated in the West Midlands region approximately 15 miles south of Birmingham, within the administrative boundary of Worcestershire County Council. The Borough has a population of 84,300 with a higher percentage of young people (age 0-15 years) compared with the rest of the County. Redditch Borough has high levels of open space in comparison to surrounding districts; this is one of the features that makes Redditch distinctive. Within the Borough, there are six Sites of Special Scientific Interest, 24 Special Wildlife Sites, numerous Local Nature Reserves and three parks that hold a Green Flag Award. There are a number of overseas companies established in the Borough and the Kingfisher Shopping Centre boasts many big name department stores. There is a very diverse population within the Borough and there are four areas that are within in the top 10% most deprived in England. Issues including health inequalities, education and employment all impact on the Borough.



What matters?

Redditch Borough Council is committed to providing residents with effective and efficient services that not only meet their needs but understand them too. We have listened to demand from our customers in order to understand what goes on in our communities and considered how we work with partners to support the issues within those communities. Through considering what really matters to our residents we have produced a set of six strategic purposes to guide us; they are based on customer demands and data and evidence about the needs of and issues affecting the people of Redditch Borough. Working to these purposes will help us to understand the needs of the Borough and how, together with our partners, we can improve the lives of our residents and the prospects for Redditch Borough as a whole.



- 6297 crimes recorded (2011/12)
- 4979 anti-social behaviour incidents recorded (2011/12)
- 14.2% of residents asked feel that anti-social behaviour is a problem in their local area (Viewpoint Nov 2012)
- 33% of residents asked feel that clean streets are an important factor in making somewhere a good place to live (Viewpoint Nov 2012)
- Between November 2011 and October 2012 there were 1563 fly tipping reports

Keep my place safe & looking good

We know how important the place people live is to their happiness and wellbeing. It also has an impact on how people live their lives; the places they visit, when they go out and how they get there.

We want to make sure that these concerns are at the heart of our work in Redditch Borough and that we understand where the issues are and how we can work with our partners address them. We will also work to combat illegal activity such as fly tipping which can blight the environment.

Data is key to our understanding of the issues; from trees that needs cutting to levels of anti-social behaviour. This information will help the Council, from Members to frontline officers, to make the right decisions about where to prioritise resources so that we can make Redditch Borough a great place to live, work and visit.



Help me run a successful business

- 73.9% of people aged 16-74 are economically active (2011)
- 8.1% of economically active people are self employed (2011)
- 19.1% of people work in manufacturing (2011)
- 290 business 'births' (2011)
- 260 business 'deaths' (2011)

We want Redditch Borough to be a place where businesses thrive. The Borough has excellent links to Birmingham and the motorway network which makes it a perfect place to start or develop a business. Supporting businesses to flourish will help the local economy and bring more employment possibilities to our residents; more income will be brought into the Borough and standard of living and quality of life will improve.

We will make sure that we understand the numbers of businesses starting and ceasing so that we can, where appropriate, target support or work with partners in the region to give businesses the best start or guidance. We also need to consider the land and sites we have available for businesses and to balance their needs with those of local residents and the environment.



Help me to be financially independent (including education and skills)

- Average household income is £36,991 (2012)
- 11.7% of the population (16-64) are claiming out of work benefits (Aug 2012)
- 3.5% of the population (16-64) are claiming Jobs Seekers Allowance (May 2013)
- 7.2% of 18-24 year olds are claiming Job Seekers Allowance (May 2013)
- Approximately 3,300 children live in poverty (2009) and deprivation is higher than the England average (2010)
- 25.1% of residents over 16 have no qualifications (2011)
- 81.9% of pupils achieved 5+ grades A*-C at GCSE and 63.6% of pupils achieved 5+ grades A*-C including Maths and English (2011-12)

The financial crisis of the last few years has taken a toll on national and global economies. The effects are being felt by people all over the Country, including Redditch Borough residents. Having enough money to pay your bills or buy enough food are essential to all people, which is why financial independence is such an important issue. As a community leader, Redditch Borough Council is committed to supporting our residents to manage their finances wherever possible. However, as a responsible public authority we will not tolerate people abusing the system through fraud and will work with residents to recover arrears.

To get a full picture, we will work with partners to understand unemployment levels, benefit take-up and if people are struggling with their rent, mortgage or Council Tax. By understanding the issues facing Redditch Borough residents and how those issues may differ around the Borough we can alter how we deliver our services to maximise their impact. We can also work with partners in the public and voluntary sectors to ensure that the right support is available to our residents when they need it. Another key part of this issue is education and skills; we will work with partners to understand the barriers to education and the different routes people could take to get the skills they and local employers need.

Help me to live my life independently (including health and activity)

- 8% of people in Redditch Borough have long-term health problems or disabilities which limit their day to day activities a lot (2011)
- 5.4% of people describe their health as “bad” or “very bad” (2011)
- Life expectancy is 8.7 years lower for men and 9.4 years lower for women in the most deprived areas of Redditch than in the least deprived areas (2008-10)
- 10.6% of people provide unpaid care (2011)
- An estimated 22.6% of adults smoke (2010/11)
- An estimated 24.1% of adults eat healthily (2006-8)
- An estimated 28.6% of adults are classified as obese (2006/8) and 20.9% of Year 6 children (2010/11)

Being independent is essential to quality of life and we recognise that some people struggle to access services due to their health, disability or isolation. We want to understand the issues that prevent people from living independently or result in people going into residential care. This is an area where we will work closely with partners such as Worcestershire County Council and the NHS to ensure that services are targeted at the people who need it most. We will also work with voluntary sector partners to provide the most appropriate support to our communities.

By capturing information on the health issues affecting the Borough or how many people are caring for a relative or loved one we will start to develop a picture not only of the support residents may need now but what support they may need in the future. This will help the Council and its partners to plan effectively for the future needs of our residents, whether in terms of home adaptations or numbers of suitable and accessible properties.



Help me find somewhere to live in my locality

- Average house price is £158,260 (2012) The population of Redditch Borough is predicted to increase by 3,600 people between 2011 and 2021 (2011)
- The number of households in Redditch Borough is predicted to increase by around 2,000 between 2011 and 2021 (2011)
- 65.7% of the tenure profile are owner occupiers (2011)
- 21.2% of the tenure profile are social rented (2011)

Having somewhere to live is fundamentally important; finding appropriate accommodation can sometimes be challenging and renting or buying a home can be very expensive. We need to understand not only the demand on the housing market, be that emergency housing or finding a home that is suitable for a growing family, but whether enough new homes are being built to meet future need.

By looking at what housing is needed in conjunction with financial measures such as rent or mortgage arrears we can start to understand the pressures people face in not only getting but staying in a home. Based on data and consultation we will plan for the future to ensure that we have enough of the right housing for the people of Redditch Borough.



- Residents surveyed were most likely to use parks for walking, jogging or cycling and Arrow Valley Park was the most popular (Viewpoint Nov 2012)
- Residents surveyed felt prevented from using parks by issues/ perceptions of anti-social behaviour, dog fouling, drinking and drug taking (Viewpoint Nov 2012)
- The Olympic Torch Relay event had the highest levels of satisfaction with residents (Viewpoint Nov 2012)
- It is estimated that 36.2% of residents 16 years and above take part in physical activity for 30 minutes at least once a week (2011/12)
- There are 2,152 gym memberships at Council run facilities (Apr 2013)
- Residents feel prevented from participating in sports and physical activity because of issues such as cost and health problems (Viewpoint Nov 2012)

Provide good things for me to see, do & visit

It is important to remember that having something good to do in your area is also central to meeting the needs of our residents. It also brings visitors to the Borough which is positive for the local economy. Having something to do can also be essential in health and wellbeing; whether that is through visiting the Palace Theatre, joining a local accredited sports group or attending a guided walk through one

of our open spaces. To understand if there are good things to see, do and visit in the Borough we will look at who is, and who is not, attending the services we provide and whether there are any gaps in our provision. This will mean we will need to work with partners and private providers to gain a full picture of what is on offer in Redditch Borough, from events to football in the town centre.



How the Council will support the plan

In order to meet our Strategic Purposes, we will need to change how the whole Council works. Every area of the Council will look at how it works and what demands are being placed on them, redesigning their services and procedures to meet the demand.

We will ensure that we:

- **Provide excellent customer care at all times**
- **Listen to our residents and try to understand their needs**
- **Deliver our core services efficiently and effectively**
- **Make the best use of our resources, with residents at the heart of all we do**
- **Work with partners in the public, voluntary and private sectors to ensure residents of Redditch Borough get the services and support they need**

Redditch Borough Council is committed to ensuring an excellent customer experience for all our customers and aims to have people, systems and processes in place which make it easy for customers to access our services. We believe that every customer should receive the same high level of customer care and our customer experience strategy Every Customer, Every Time set out our vision for the delivery of this.

As issues within the area can change we are committed to understanding whether we are delivering the purposes we have set for the Borough; we will do this by using measures to capture data which Officers, Managers and Members will use to understand the services we provide. These will change as situations change and will be used to allocate resources and to help us gain a true picture of the Borough. We also need to recognise the changing national agendas and the impact they could have on our outcomes.

As we progress, the budget will be aligned with the strategic purposes; moving away from money being allocated to specific service areas but instead allowing flexibility to tackle issues as they arise making our services more responsive and effective. Our internal support services will also be aligned to enable the organisation to deliver the strategic purposes.

As the strategic purposes cover issues fundamental to our customers' lives, we will need to work differently with our partners. Redditch Partnership, the local strategic partnership for Redditch Borough, will be a key stakeholder in developing and supporting these new ways of working. We are also starting to explore working in a more locality driven way, which aims to understand the differing needs of communities within our Borough and how public services can support them.

Where are we now?

Redditch Borough Council is looking at how services work across the whole organisation, with teams considering the demand that they get and how they could make the services more focused around customers real needs. These projects are on-going and will help us to deliver what matters to customers.



Locality Trial - Winyates

The trial is seeking to find a way to deliver a service that is designed to identify the underlying issues affecting the citizen- the real problems- not just the presenting issue, in this case rent arrears. It is looking to provide the right support when it is needed, prevent needs from escalating and as a result reduce the number of people in need of significant professional support. This should also have an impact on the number of unresolved or repeat demands.



Revenues & Benefits

Over the last few years we have started to change the way that our revenues and benefits services are designed. A big change has seen the experts dealing with demand up front, resolving as many issues as possible during the first contact. Not only will this benefit the customer as they are helped quickly but will also save the organisation money.



Trees

The trees team have undergone a trial to understand how they could work better, removing activities that add no value to the customer. By focusing on what the customer needs, it will enable the team to increase proactive work which will help to reduce the amount of reactive work. The trial has seen the time it takes for trees to be dealt with move from weeks to a mean average of 11 days.



Bin Collection

The refuse team have looked at how they could improve the routes that the refuse wagons take around the Borough, reducing mileage, carbon emissions and providing greater support in the case of breakdown. Focusing on one type of collection at a time is improving efficiency and further projects are planned to help with missed bins.

We need the organisation to be flexible enough to meet the changing demands of our residents. To ensure that we are working in a way that supports this flexibility and keeps the customer at the centre of all we do, we have developed a set of corporate principles. These principles will guide how we change the business, how decisions are made and how we work going forward.

- **We will meet individual needs where possible and provide excellent customer care**
- **Policy and decision making are informed by our customers and their needs**
- **Partnership working is central to how we do business and how we understand the real needs of our customers**
- **Senior management and Members will develop a view of the organisation as a whole and use this understanding to ensure we do what matters to the customer**
- **Performance management should be based on using real data to learn and improve**
- **Managers focus on using this data on a day to day basis within their service to make changes and to try to fix the underlying causes of problems**
- **Efficiencies will come from making the service focused on the customers true needs**
- **Good performance comes from services working better as a whole not from individuals**
- **Costs should be looked at across the whole organisation**
- **Expertise should be placed at the frontline as appropriate and staff empowered to make decisions based on their skills and knowledge not set procedures**
- **We will learn what matters to our customers by spending time listening to their real enquiries and issues**
- **All major redesign will look at localities not service areas**
- **We will only do value things that help us deliver our strategic purposes**
- **We will align our resources to ensure we are delivering against our strategic purposes**

