

Portfolio Holder Annual Report

Portfolio: Corporate Management
Portfolio Holder: Councillor Michael Braley

Year: 2009/10

1. Executive Summary

1.1. Please provide a summary of progress over the last year.

Business Transformation (including ICT, Organisational Development and Business Transformation)

ICT Services

- Delivered phase one of the ICT Shared Service including:
 - Implemented a staff restructure
 - Relocated Business Development staff at RBC
 - Purchased and installed a new Storage Area for electronic files
 - Purchased new network and wireless connections for the Town Hall
 - Reduced outstanding ICT helpdesk calls by 10%
 - Reduced the number of physical servers from sixty to two by virtualising their sever environment
 - Rationalised business applications by 10%
 - Implemented a new helpdesk service
 - Started to upgrade the wide area network
 - Redesigned the home page on the RBC website e.g.: joint recycling pages, foreign language translation links
 - Implemented a system for handing FOI requests
 - Rationalised the number of individual email addresses published on the website
 - Drafted a joint Information Management Strategy
 - Conducting data cleansing in various departments and assisting in migration of data to the ORB

Organisational Development

- Delivered the first shared Management Conference
- Drafted a joint Workforce Plan
- Carried out workforce data analysis to assist Heads of Service when implementing a shared service
- Carried out a skills/qualifications analysis to provide data for Heads of Service and to link into the new shared PDR scheme
- Drafted a joint Organisational Development Strategy
- Developed a Core Skills Framework to link into the shared PDR scheme
- Carried out the staff survey and developed an action plan to address any concerns.
- Delivered change support workshops for 4th Tier managers ahead of the Transformation work.

Business Transformation

- Drafted a high level Shared Service & Transformation Programme Plan
- Delivered system thinking training to CMT
- Set up the Transformation Programme Board
- Established a small transformation team
- Introduced systems thinking method to 4th Tier managers
- Scheduled the scoping work for the Revs & Bens transformation
- Scheduled customer demand analysis across both councils

Resources (including Financial Services, Revenue Services, Benefits, Procurement, Human Resources and Internal Audit)

Financial Services

- Financial Services participated in a collaborative procurement exercise with the other Districts in the County and Staffordshire Moorlands District Council in respect of insurance covers. This resulted in significant savings to the Council.
- Review of Financial Services Section completed.
- Value for Money Steering Group and Risk Management Monitoring Group established.
- Quarterly budget and performance monitoring reports developed.
- Financial and governance awareness training provided to both officers and Members.

Revenues Services

- Direct Debit take up campaign instigated.
- Mailshot of potential Direct Debit converters undertaken
- Revised Recovery Policy drafted and approved by Council.
- Strategy and Action Plan developed and implemented.
- Recovery process reviewed in conjunction with the Income and Welfare Team and Performance Development Team.

Benefits Service

- Improvement Plan for the Benefits Service produced. Actions against plan reported on a quarterly basis to CMT and Executive Committee.
- Quick response, appointments and home visiting service all promoted for benefit claims
- Project Officer and Income Maximisation Officers recruited
- Benefits Service customer satisfaction and service improvement survey undertaken

- Take Up Strategy for benefits developed and approved by members.
- Two Income Maximisation Officers (Benefits Service) recruited and range of Take Up activities undertaken.
- Improved performance reporting in all service areas.
- Lean Thinking to review processes and procedures.
- Second NVQ completed – evidence gathering procedures improved.
- Electronic claim form developed and used in Customer Service Centre and from customers homes

Procurement Service

- Significant savings identified from procurement activities led by the Procurement Team.

Property Services

- Improvement monitoring of commercial lettings through closer working of the Income Team and Property services.
- The Property and Asset Maintenance services were involved in a Regional Improvement and Efficiency Partnership (now IEWM) project in relation to assets which helped to shape a 10 year programme aimed at addressing the asset challenges faced by local authorities.
- The Council's Voluntary Land Registration Programme carried on throughout the year with many of the Council's commercial and public buildings, such as the District Shopping Centres, the Palace Theatre and the Swimming Baths being successfully registered. The Programme also assists with Objective LDP7 as transfers of registered land are usually more straightforward than when land is unregistered.
- The draft Energy Strategy reported to the Council's Executive Committee for adoption. Asset Maintenance Officers have been working on energy efficiency measures within Council buildings and a bid has been submitted for an energy efficiency scheme loan to enable energy efficiency measures to be installed faster than budgets would otherwise permit.
- Options for the former covered market site considered by Executive Committee.
- Work commenced on developing and maintaining the asset register.

- Organisational arrangements for corporate asset management reviewed as part of the Worcestershire Enhanced Two Tier programme and the decision to proceed with a service delivered by Worcestershire County Council agreed by members.

Human Resources

- Arranged for Human Resource Officer to attend Chamber meeting to build relationship with local businesses.
- Work Experience practices reviewed.
- Recruitment Portal introduced.
- The potential for setting up or attending existing Careers Fairs identified.
- Work commenced on review of Flexible Working Policy.
- Regular circulation of sickness statistic to CMT and Members.
- Sickness absence toolkit introduced.
- Exploratory work undertaken on the introduction of regular health talks.
- Work commenced on a Terminally Ill Policy.
- Stress risk assessments implemented for employees returning to work from a stress related absence.
- Current SLA with WCC Occupational Health reviewed.
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- Work commenced on a Terminally Ill Policy.
- Stress risk assessments implemented for employees returning to work from a stress related absence.
- Current SLA with WCC Occupational Health reviewed.
- Draft standardised TUPE guidance for use by both Redditch Borough Council and Bromsgrove District Council.
- Work started on the harmonisation of terms and conditions of employment and policies.
- Draft People Strategy developed.
- Workforce data collated (data profile for RBC)
- Horizon scanning completed.

- New Staff Performance Management Scheme drafted.
- Training on Performance Management System arranged.
- Performance Management interviews completed.
- Training budgets centralised.
- Guidance issued on process to access training/budget.
- Matrix of training needs developed.
- Tender issued for a select list of learning and development providers.

Internal Audit

- Council agreed to participate in the WETT Internal Audit Service hosted by Worcester City Council. Implementation from 1st June 2010.

Legal and Democratic Services

- Strong Leader model adopted by Full Council to be implemented in the new Municipal Year
- Large scale voluntary registration work – Commercial and open space completed – now working on residential areas
- Solicitors from both RBC and BDC are working collaboratively to ensure that all legal work remains in house
- Standards Committee process reviewed and refreshed and a number of matters have now moved through the entire process to determination hearing notwithstanding previous years of inactivity in this area
- Successful transfer of land charges, street naming and numbering, local property gazetteer post shared management team restructure
- New format Forward Plan and Key Decisions
- Improved Council meeting arrangements
- Recruited additional O and S Officer (1 year fixed term contract)
- Working collaboratively with BDC to ensure all committee meetings covered by professional officers
- Overview and Scrutiny award achieved

- Assistance given to BDC to administer the Freedom of the Borough
- Collective work with BDC to achieve an electronic room booking system
- Successful election and canvass

Customer Service

- Development of a joint customer 'experience strategy which focuses on the key principle that 'everybody matters' and pulls together our transformation aspirations and our commitment to developing staff - because great customer service starts with our people. It also covers the basics of excellent customer experience, and understanding our customers. Note: this will be presented to members in January.
- Reviewed and revised Customer Service standards, to ensure we meet customers increasing expectations in respect of quality customer service.
- Increased range of services offered at Customer Service Centres and working with other organisation to enable us to provide a wider range of public services in one location.
- Worked with Worcestershire Hub colleagues towards Customer Service Excellence Accreditation for the Customer Service Centres.
- Implemented and improvement plan to reduce waiting times at the Town Hall Customer Service Centre (both face to face and phones).
- Reviewed and revised our customer feedback policy to enable customer to provide feedback, and make complaints more easily and ensure high quality responses to complaints which address the customers issue and clearly sets out the actions the Council will take in response.

Performance Unit *

- Completion of draft shared services business care for Policy, Performance and Partnerships team (now subject to approval).
- Updated corporate performance indicator set to reflect corporate priorities.
- Completed and published Council Plan 2010-2013.
- Reported quarterly on performance and improved format based on Member feedback.

- Completed draft Data Quality Policy.
- Agree single format for business planning across both councils and simplified format.
- Worked with Resources Directorate to ensure budget/business planning timetable, with appropriate calendar space for senior officers and Members to consider this year's difficult budget.
- Rolled out corporate project management methodology in Redditch as part of handover of this function to Business Transformation Team. Also, simplified format, making it quicker and easier for managers to use.
- Worked with Resources Directorate to set up Budget Jury, to ensure resident feedback on budget deliberations.
- Produced 2009/2010 Annual Report.

* note: this is only performance management. The rest of the Policy, Performance and Partnerships Department e.g. community engagement, policy, communications, climate change and partnership working are covered by different portfolios.

2. Performance

2.1. Please detail areas of good performance over the past year.

Business Transformation (including ICT)

- Reduced the number of physical servers from sixty to two by virtualising their sever environment
- Rationalised business applications by 10%
- Delivered the first shared Management Conference
- Delivered phase one of the ICT shared services project on time and to budget
- Implemented a system for handing FOI requests
- Council presented an award by the Society of Procurement Officers for its role in the collaborative insurance tender.
- Management and collection of all HB overpayments improved.

- Benefit Overpayment Recovery post recruited to.
- IBS System downtime reduced by almost 50% mostly due to upgrades being installed at weekends.
- Lean Thinking used to review processes and procedures in Benefits, Revenues and Finance Sections.
- Implemented revised processes for Quick Response scheme for new claims, trialled a more efficient way of processing new claims and revised the evidence gathering procedures. Two teams completed NVQ so internal skills to independantly continue improvements achieved – Continuous Improvement Team set up.
- Increased proportion of benefits claimants paid by BACS.

Resources

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Legal and Democratic

- Enhanced Forward Plan and Key Decision information
- Improved structure in deliver of Overview and Scrutiny Committees
- Recruited temporary O and S Officer
- Review of Standards Committee arrangements
- Large Scale Voluntary Registration work completed for commercial and open space land
- Staff issues continue within some areas – more information can be provided on a confidential basis
- Sharing staff to ensure work remains in house

- Much improved canvass response in terms of the quality of data and the efficiency of data capture

Customer Service

- Improved response to customers calls – increased % of calls answered
- Improved Customer Satisfaction
- Increased capture of customer transaction numbers
- Improved capture of avoidable contact data

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Please detail key performance indicators that are of concern

Key Performance Indicators – Areas of Concern			
PI Ref	PI Description	Explanation and/or corrective action.	Impact on budget
-	% of over allowed benefits collected	Dedicated Overpayments Officer employed.	Could be self-funding. Any over allowed recovered is retained by the Council.
WM03	Percentage of Satisfied One-Stop Shop customers	Whilst satisfaction with the customer service centre function is high it is difficult to improve upon. New mechanisms, which will ensure feedback is more objective, may result in a reported reduction in satisfaction but this will be because we are collecting the information differently and will reach a wider cross section of our customers.	None
WM04	Percentage of enquiries dealt with at first point of contact	This indicator is somewhat misleading because it does not record the true demands of customers. More informative measures of the service will be established	None
WM011	Percentage of calls resolved at first point of contact	This indicator is somewhat misleading because it does not	None

		provide us with information in respect of what can and cannot be resolved at the first point of contact. More informative measures of the service will be established	
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3. Revenue Budget

3.1. Explain problem areas – what has been done, what is planned to be done – impact on priorities, key deliverables

Revenue Budget – Areas of Concern			
Budget Ref	Description	Explanation and/or corrective action.	Impact on performance and priorities
	General increases in application support costs e.g. Govt Connect	Central govt have reduced their contribution to these costs and passed them onto local govt. Budget bid has been made for this.	Would have a high impact on the delivery of the Revenue and Benefits service as Govt Connect is used for data transfer to the DWP
	Repair and Maintenance of buildings	Demand on budget. Now managed by Worcestershire County Council. Potential for efficiencies to be delivered through economies of scale.	Potential for improvement.
	Internal Audit Resources.	Now part of county wide service provided by Worcester City Council. Should enable greater resilience.	Potential for improvement.

4. Capital Budget

4.1. Explain problem areas – what has been done, what is planned to be done – impact on priorities, key deliverables

Capital Budget – Areas of Concern			
Budget Ref	Description	Explanation and/or corrective action.	Impact on performance and priorities
	Redevelopment of Church Hill Centre	Downturn in economy has impacted on the financial viability of this project. Project has been reviewed accordingly and now approved.	Potential delays in delivery.

5. The Year Ahead

5.1 Please detail the portfolio holder's main areas of focus in 2010/2011:-

Business Transformation (including ICT, Organisational Development and Business Transformation)

ICT Services

- Maintain corporate compliance with the Government Connect Code of Connection
- Implement self service modules for the HR system
- Implement a joint Information and Records Management Strategy to include:
 - Review of paper and electronic records
 - Implementation of a retention and disposal schedule
 - Delivery of a corporate training course on Data Protection
 - Working with service teams to update information available on the intranet and internet.
 - Conducting systems audits for Data Protection compliance
- Continued development of the Internet and Intranet (ORB)
- Develop a joint GIS Strategy
- Develop a joint strategy for Street Naming and Numbering

Organisational Development

- Deliver Investors in People for RBC
- Draft a joint Management Development Strategy
- Create and deliver an employee engagement strategy
- Undertake a joint employee survey

Business Transformation

- Deliver systems thinking training to 4th Tier managers
- Ensure Cabinet and Executive Members receive an overview of the Systems Thinking methodology
- Ensure shared services are delivered using the Shared Service Framework
- Ensure the Shared Service & Transformation Programme is delivered as planned.

Resources (including Financial Services, Revenue Services, Benefits, Procurement, Human Resources and Internal Audit)

- Shared Service for Human Resources
- Transformation of Benefits Services, Revenues Service and Income
- Implementation of WETT Property Services hosted by Worcestershire County Council
- Implementation of WETT Internal Audit Service hosted by Worcester City Council
- Re-inspection of Benefits Service
- Implementation of International Financial Reporting Standards
- Implementation of Job Evaluation

Legal and Democratic Services

- Shared Equality and Diversity Service between Bromsgrove and Redditch
- Explore possibilities of further shared service activity across the County within LEDs
- Work with Bromsgrove to continue to ensure efficiencies
- Deliver Elections/ Referendum in May
- Members Development and induction of new members
- Review and update the Constitution
- Deliver outcomes from Localism and Decentralisation Bill
- Manage budget cuts effectively to minimise impact on service delivery

- Manage through the impact of the Equality Act

Customer Service

- Launch of Every Customer, Every time – Customer Experience Strategy and implement action plan.
- Implement and monitor revised customer feedback system.
- Support systems thinking reviews.
- Implement changes to service delivery at Customer Service Centres as a result of systems thinking reviews.
- Develop and implement customer services training plan for staff. Review Council letters and information to produce better quality interactions and reduce avoidable contact.
- Establish mechanisms for gaining improved customer feedback. Review and improve the existing customer service centre survey.
- Develop a set of staff protocols or 'behaviours' for all staff, linked to work in Organisations Development in respect of core skills.
- Implement feedback survey for complainants.
- Customer Service Excellence
 - Set up project group to conduct internal assessment and gap analysis
 - Work towards full accreditation
- Review Customer Service Centres' service and improve waiting times.
- Review current payment options and make recommendations for change/savings.
- Develop 'Tell us Once' capability to reduce the need for customers to keep telling us if they change their address etc.
- Develop a Customer Service Advisor performance framework to enable greater individual performance management

Performance Unit

- Embed new shared service.
- Support systems thinking.
- Develop local performance indicators that support corporate priorities.
- Continue to run performance reports: Council Plan Pt1 and 2, quarterly reporting.
- Roll out data quality strategy, in particular, data quality audits.