

TRANSFORMATION STRATEGY

The report to Cabinet on 21 November 2018 agreed a range of areas that would be part of the next phase of Vibrant Voices engagement. These continue to be rolled out, with a number of face to face and pop-up sessions delivered in recent months. All "Councillor Conversations" now have a dedicated session on Transformation, and this provides excellent opportunities to maintain ongoing dialogue with Elected Members.

Members have previously noted the qualities and behaviours that best represent our employees, with these reflected as "*Be the FACE of East Ayrshire*". This has recently been the subject of a very detailed piece of work to develop a framework to support and drive the culture change necessary to deliver organisational transformation. This wide reaching framework will shortly be reported to Cabinet, and sets out how the empowerment of staff and communities can ultimately lead to reduced demand and costs.

There has been a number of recent conversations with both North and South Ayrshire Councils, to identify opportunities for greater collaboration. While not being developed with the same formality as a shared service, a number of quick wins are being identified to reduce costs and improve resilience through more effective collaboration. We remain committed to exploring any opportunities to work with others, where services can be improved or costs reduced.

As part of the action to improve digital inclusion through digital access and learning, the Council recently launched a partnership with the Duke of York, Inspiring Digital Enterprise Award (iDEA). iDEA is a digital and enterprise version of The Duke of Edinburgh Award, and is an accredited national programme. While iDEA is widely used across England, we are the first Council in Scotland to partner with iDEA. It is designed to be used by adults and young people alike, is free to access, can be undertaken on your own, in a group, or together as a family - from a phone, tablet or computer. For every new skill mastered, iDEA learners are awarded a digital badge, which is worth points, and when you earn enough points, you are awarded the Bronze, Silver or Gold *Inspiring Digital Enterprise Award*. Badges cover a wide range of topics including cyber security, animation, and coding. A number of events are planned to raise awareness of this innovative approach to learning new digital skills.

WORKSTREAM 1 – FAIRER, KINDER AND CONNECTED

Introduce automatic awards for free school meals and clothing grants	<p>Members will recall the previous work on automatic awards last year, with a new online system now developed for use during 2019/20 to simplify both the application and assessment processes. This went live on 4 June 2019 and has been the subject of extensive communications to ensure parents and carers know how to apply.</p> <p>The simple online form, which can be used on mobile devices eg smartphones, will present a better customer experience than in previous years, with support in place to ensure anyone without digital access can complete the form over the phone.</p> <p>The assessment process has also been simplified and will now be undertaken by Revenues and Benefits staff as part of their "core" duties. This will remove the need to employ additional temporary staff (budget of £0.020m).</p>
Extend volunteering	<p>National Volunteering Week (1 - 7 June) provided an opportunity to celebrate and recognise the impact that volunteering has in our communities. Volunteering will continue to be a significant feature of our vibrant and empowered communities, and we will actively promote our volunteering scheme to support and grow this area.</p>
Reduce digital inequality	<p>The Digital Participation Charter has been renewed for a further year. The five pledges are: skill-up; support our staff; support Scotland; the essentials; come together. We are responding well in each of these areas and continue to tackle inequalities and improve participation through a solutions-oriented focus group (Digital Access Network). Awareness of digital learning opportunities and digital access points was identified as a concern, and is being addressed by creating an interactive map across a range of public service partners (including EAC, EALT, libraries, community groups, DWP), shortly being extended to include the business community.</p> <p>An East Ayrshire Digital Week is being planned for September and will cover a wide range of topics and audiences, with a real focus on participation across our workforce, partners and communities.</p>

WORKSTREAM 2 – WORKFORCE PLANNING

Develop a workforce plan	Members will recall that a Workforce Plan was presented and agreed at Cabinet on 1 May 2019. This is aligned to the People Strategy and the Transformation Strategy, and identifies how the key priorities of these strategies will be implemented in terms of service redesign and impact on the workforce (service reduction, areas of growth, workforce skillsets, flexible and empowered culture, succession planning, career pathways, digital skills). A range of actions were agreed with implementation being monitored through routine EAP reporting.
Workforce reduction - service review and redesign	All Heads of Service are identifying opportunities for redesign into the future, and a number of projects are now emerging where there are opportunities to deliver services in a different way. These will continue to be developed, with appropriate engagement with service users, staff groups, Trade Unions and Elected Members as appropriate. Detailed work is being progressed within Finance and ICT, Waste Management, ARA and across financial-advice related services. These reviews will consider future service demands, customer expectations, best practice, and performance, and will require to align to the future service spending targets previously approved by Cabinet.
Workforce growth – career change pathways	Members will recall a career change pathway was designed for early learning and childcare opportunities, with an initial cohort of 42 employees recently moving into these roles from other parts of the Council. This will continue to be developed to ensure these opportunities are maximised as the service grows in response to the 1140 hours requirement. A career change pathway for primary teaching has also been agreed, as part of the Learn to Teach programme, with 7 employees recently submitted for inclusion on the programme, delivered in partnership with the University of Dundee. Further career change pathways in growth areas continue to be scoped and developed, to provide maximum opportunities for our employees at a time when the Council is becoming smaller.

WORKSTREAM 3 – DIGITALLY CONNECTED

Support services to work digitally, and deliver more effective customer contact arrangements	Members previously agreed a number of high-level principles to underpin the strategic review of customer contact. This project is now underway and will ensure that cost effective and customer-focussed services can be delivered, in support of redesign activities taking place across all services. A small group of officers visited Kirklees Council, an exemplar in this area of work, to understand their journey and experiences. A further visit by operational staff is now being finalised to allow our own vision and plans to be shaped and confirmed. Development of the Kilmarnock customer service centre is now progressing, with a contract recently awarded to redevelop the former Torbett's facility into a purpose-designed centre. A detailed report will be submitted to Cabinet after the summer recess to fully inform Elected Members of this important, transformational project.
Become a paperlite Council	Council meetings became paperlite with effect from 1 April. This is now being extended, at pace, across the Council with EMT and CMT also now paperlite. A parallel piece of work is being delivered to ensure we have a robust, secure and cost effective solution for electronic record management, which also supports the Smarter Working agenda.

WORKSTREAM 4 – VIBRANT AND EMPOWERED

Develop a place-based, clean green and vibrant approach to delivering outdoor services	A new way of place-based working was initially designed alongside the outdoor services workforce. This is now operational in the Doon Valley and Cumnock areas, with plans in place to roll-out across the whole Council during 2019/20. A participatory approach to agreeing priorities for the place-based teams will be finalised in the Doon Valley with a voting event in June; learning from this approach can then be used to shape the wider work as this rolls out. It is anticipated that savings of up to 20% can be made from the Outdoor Services budget through this way of working.
Identify other opportunities for place based working	Principles for place-based working to underpin service redesign were previously agreed by Members on 6 February 2019. An initial series of workshops for managers have now been delivered to further develop an understanding across all services of place-based working. These are now being extended to the wider workforce, and also form part of the FACE framework to ensure that place-based principles are fully embedded within future service delivery models.
Review of large scale grants	The initial focus on this piece of work has been around the various elements of funding and work associated with money advice / financial inclusion services. A review of all the various elements is currently being undertaken, to identify the optimal approach for supporting our most vulnerable residents. This will look internally as well as externally, and will likely make recommendations around service redesign as well as grant making / partnership arrangements. This will be supported by a company called "Looking Local" who provide a proven digital solution initially developed with Kirklees Council (www.betteroffkirklees.org.uk). Given the importance of this area, an early report to Cabinet is anticipated.

WORKSTREAM 5 – PROPERTY

Agree the approach to future space usage; and review office accommodation requirements	The overall approach and smarter working principles were agreed by Cabinet on 7 November 2018. These principles have been introduced over the last two months within the Opera House, releasing sufficient capacity in the building to accommodate all ARA and Planning and Economic Development staff from the Johnnie Walker Bond (JWB). The employee:desk ratio at the Opera House has improved from 11.1:10 to 7.3:10 following the adoption of smarter working. The additional capacity in the JWB is now being used to consolidate and co-locate health and social care staff from a number of disparate offices. These moves will allow the former Kirkstyle PS to be freed up for use as decant school accommodation, avoiding the significant costs (estimated at £2m) associated with purchasing temporary accommodation. Future office space requirements will be finalised as this initial phase is concluded, and will be closely aligned to the strategic work being overseen by the Project Management Board - Kilmarnock Town Centre.
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WORKSTREAM 6 – INCOME AND COMMERCIALISATION

Explore opportunities for new areas of charging / revenue streams	As Members will recall a transformational review of parking was undertaken and reported to Members on 27 February 2019. A number of new opportunities to generate additional parking income were identified and have recently been subject to extensive public engagement. Public events were held across a number of towns, with an online survey running in parallel; several organisations and community groups have also gathered and submitted their own comments, with a total of almost 7,000 responses received. Results and comments are currently being collated and analysed, with a report being produced for Members' consideration after the summer recess.
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