



Business transformation Programme

August 2016



Transform
Tewkesbury Borough



Business transformation

“Better for customers and better for business”

The challenge

Tewkesbury Borough Council is currently undergoing significant change, due to cuts from central government.

Alongside other councils in the country, we have had to make huge savings while working out how to deliver services in a way that costs less but provides the same level and quality of support for our residents and communities.

The financial pressure on us hasn't lifted and having saved £3m since 2014 we need to save a further £2.2m up until 2020.

Financial environment

The public sector austerity programme, embarked upon by the coalition government in 2010, continues to impact on local government finance. Substantial cuts to the Revenue Support Grant have already been absorbed by the council with government projections detailing the end of the support grant in 2019/20. The government introduced a partial retained business rates scheme in 2013 whereby authorities could benefit from growth in business. Unfortunately for this council, successful appeals by businesses, such as Virgin Media have led to losses in the last couple of years.

The New Homes Bonus programme was also introduced by the coalition government which saw financial rewards being retained by the authority for six years in return for the occupation of new homes within the borough. The council has received significant amounts from this scheme which has supported the council's financial position through austerity. However, the government announced in late 2015 that it intended to review the scheme with the objective of reducing it by around two-thirds. The council is still awaiting the outcome of the consultation.

The government is also consulting on 100% business rates retention for local authorities by the end of the current parliament. This could be beneficial for the council but until the full scheme detail is agreed, the impact of the scheme cannot be projected. It is also dependent on a healthy economy.

Given the changes to local government finance in recent years and the continuing uncertainty over funding, it is imperative the council does what it can to meet the financial challenges it faces. The business transformation programme is key to this.

The council's response

“ In 2014, we approved a new programme, Transform Tewkesbury Borough. The

programme involves looking at how we can do things differently and innovatively to create savings but maintaining our ethos that whatever we do and in the decisions we make, we will be a council that is better for customers and better for business.

We were buoyed by the feedback of a Local Government Association peer review which concluded in November 2014 we were a council that punches above its weight and was one that understood its challenges and was committed to change.

Since the introduction of the programme this has provided a strategic and planned approach to meet the challenges ahead and has enabled us to build upon the success of previous achievements. I am really pleased with the positivity of the Transform Working Group which has seen members and officers working effectively together to meet this challenge.

As a result we have delivered significant transformational projects such as the recently opened new leisure centre, continued development of the Public Service Centre, delivery of a new operating model for our depot services, and individual service reviews such as Revenues and Benefits which is now a top performing service. Moving forward, significant projects on the horizon include delivery of our new digital strategy, Tewkesbury town centre regeneration and the development

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of a more commercial approach to maximising our income.

This new entrepreneurial way of thinking will be essential to support our financial position, particularly if there are further expected cuts in central government funding. It is recognised that some of the skills we need to enable officers to develop ideas are new and as such investment in training and development is an important requirement of our new approach. As such, APSE (Association of Public Service Excellence) will be working with us to support delivery of a commercial programme.

To recognise the importance of this approach a new commercial theme has been added to the programme to support the four established themes. While our financial challenges ahead are clear, the Transform Programme will help us to make sure we are ready to face them effectively, and we will be continuing to put our residents at the very heart of what we do. ”

Cllr Dave Waters, Lead Member for Finance and Asset Management.

The council’s principles for change

The Transform Programme is guided by four principles, which will help shape future organisational change:

1. The council is able to remain financially viable as an independent organisation.
2. Improving our existing relationship and exploring possible new partnerships for the future.
3. Easy, convenient and low-cost access to services for everyone.
4. The organisation is flexible, dynamic, responsive and affordable.

The work programme

To plan and manage the programme there will be a focus on five themes. Within each theme there are key projects:

Partnerships and commissioning:

- Explore opportunities for expansion of existing shared services.
- Review all services and identify opportunities to work with partners, in order to deliver top notch services at a lower cost.
- Expand services delivered through the Public Service Centre.



Use of buildings and assets:

- Work with partners to investigate the potential for a reception refurbishment and integrated customer service team.
- Lease the top floor of the Public Services Centre.
- Deliver the council’s asset plan.
- Regeneration of Spring Gardens and Oldbury Road in Tewkesbury town centre.
- Ensure value-for- money procurement of a new waste and recycling fleet.



Using technology and sustaining improvement:

- Make better use of technology to encourage more electronic working by delivering the digital strategy.
- Complete phase two of Environmental Health and Planning service reviews and implement the findings.
- Improve the experience for the customer when contacting the council, for example, new corporate website.



People and culture:

- Create and implement a workforce development strategy.
- Plan for different ways of working, so that staff are able to work unhindered by location, work pattern, or delivery approach.



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- Deliver programmes for organisational, staff and member development.
- Maximise flexible working and flexible hiring opportunities to enable the council to recruit the best talent possible.
- Complete a programme of customer services training for staff across the council.



Commercialisation:

- Produce a business case and if viable form a housing development company.
- Embed entrepreneurial skills into the workforce.
- Work with APSE to carry out a strategic assessment of the council's commercial potential.
- Develop a pipeline of business cases for commercial projects for consideration by transform working group.
- Undertake a review of the trade waste service to ensure it is operating on a viable commercial level.
- Implementation of a fees and charges strategy to maximise the revenue stream due to the council.

Through the Transform Programme, we want to achieve:

- Significant Savings.
- Increased income through existing and new income streams.
- Consistent, reliable, high quality customer service accessible to all.
- Maximising the use of our assets.
- Commitment to the workforce and elected members to ensure they are supported, informed, involved and developed.

The business transformation programme also supports delivery of our council plan priorities. Our council plan (2016-2020) has an overall vision:

Tewkesbury borough, a place where a good quality of life is open to all.

Within the council plan is a set of values which we apply across our services and can be applied to the transform programme. The council is one which:

- Values its employees.
- Puts its customers first.
- Is positive about working with others to achieve its vision.

Our four priorities are:

- Finance and resources
- Customer focused services
- Housing
- Economic development

Monitoring of programme

An update of all projects is reported to the transform working group who meet at least six weekly. This group comprises senior officers and members including executive committee members who work together to solve the challenges ahead. A project management framework is in place to ensure there is good governance over individual projects.

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