

MID SUFFOLK COUNCIL CABINET MEMBER UPDATE

From: Councillor Glen Horn Cabinet Member for Organisational Delivery	Report Number: CMU6
To: Council	Date of meeting: 21 December 2017

TO PROVIDE AN UPDATE FROM THE CABINET MEMBER FOR ORGANISATIONAL DELIVERY

1. Overview of Portfolio

- 1.1 The Organisational Delivery Portfolio encompasses Customer Services, Business Improvement and ICT. Over the past 6 months much of the work undertaken across these areas has related to the All Together programme of work including the move to Endeavour House and the opening of a new customer access point for Mid Suffolk District Council in Stowmarket. Highlighted below is a summary of activity that has taken place across the three themes.

2. Recommendation

- 2.1 That Council notes the report.

3. Key Activities/Issues Over the Past Six Months

Customer Services

- 3.1 Following the implementation of the new customer telephony system Genesis at the end of March 2017, further back office calls were subsumed into the customer services team, including Housing Repair calls. Significant training was undertaken to ensure that staff were able to answer queries accessing multiple IT systems and following new policies and procedures.
- 3.2 To improve resilience, during a period when staff resources were depleted, a mini contact centre was established in Needham Market offices to make best use of the staff located there.
- 3.3 A review of our telephony opening times was conducted, with a different opening time trialled. Analysis of call volumes and abandonment rates informed a revised opening time of 8.45am.
- 3.4 Opening of the new customer front facing offices in Stowmarket, which is also where our telephony services are based. Significant work was undertaken in partnership with Suffolk County Council and Vertas to ensure the building was fit for purpose, including all staff receiving laptops, implementation of self-service facilities for customers, a touchdown point for other members of staff to work, as well as providing meeting/interview rooms for staff from other service teams (eg housing) to use.
- 3.5 During the past 6 months Customer Services has experienced significant changes in staffing levels and roles. The consolidation of the telephony service into one location has resulted in staff undertaking new training and skills.

This continues to be a work in progress as new staff have recently joined the organisation and we reach our full complement of resource.

Business Improvement including Policy & Performance, Data analysis and Programme Management

- 3.6 The Business Improvement team has needed to prioritise activity over the past 6 months due to temporary resource issues, and have therefore focused on some key areas, including:

Developing our Performance Framework - working with Assistant Directors and their teams, Cabinet and Lead Members, to develop and embed an outcome focused approach that measures and monitors delivery of the Joint Strategic Plan. Greater alignment with the risk management process has been achieved. Work is on-going to review indicators and targets as well as capture key achievements alongside the impact of our activities. We are also reviewing the software tools that we use, and looking to further develop our benchmarking capacity alongside the use of more qualitative data.

- 3.7 End of Year Report – a more digital interactive report that collated news stories across the two authorities, providing greater transparency to members and communities and a means to celebrate success. Bite size chunks of data and information were complimented by videos of community spokespersons providing testimonials on their experience of Council services. Work has already commenced on 17/18 End of Year report.

- 3.8 Research & Data Analysis – the team has continued to support the Overview and Scrutiny committee; assisting Members to develop their scrutiny function, by providing research, insight and knowledge through scoping and topic papers. The team has worked collaboratively across a range of partners including Public Health, Suffolk County to provide a Suffolk wide intelligence function, demonstrated by the joint development of the Suffolk Observatory.

- 3.9 Projects and Programme – development continues in this area where Assistant Directors work with a dedicated member of the Business Improvement team. Fortnightly programme meetings have started to support a more consistent approach across our organisation. CONNECT has been developed as a repository for information relating to project/programme delivery as well as performance information. However more work is needed to ensure that this resource is continually kept up to date to provide a single point of information for both staff and members.

- 3.10 Stage 2 complaints – the team continue to provide an independent investigation of stage 2 complaints, working objectively with complainants to reach a satisfactory conclusion.

4.0 *ICT*

- 4.1 Much of the activity particularly in ICT has been driven by the move to Endeavour House, enabling staff to work in an agile way. Activity has included; the set-up of a centralised scanning team that scans incoming post and distributes electronically by email to the relevant teams. Scanning of approximately 93% of paper records enabling staff to access information easily.

- 4.2 Roll out of Skype for Business for staff, enabling staff to make and receive calls from their laptops at home, in the office or out and about in the districts. Roll out of over 120 laptops to staff also, so that they can work flexibly from any location. Touch Down points created across the district, providing multiple geographical locations for staff to work from, and access facilities such as printing and meeting rooms.
- 4.3 Server room at Needham Market decommissioned and all necessary applications have been transferred into Suffolk County IT.
- 4.4 Other transformation work has continued including: Implementation of a joint planning system, enabling teams across Mid Suffolk and Babergh to integrate working practices. Introduction of a new Council Committee Information system to better manage Council business. In vehicle devices have been installed into our refuse lorries, to more efficiently collect up to the minute round information, including missed bins. Upgrade of our Finance system and the transfer of our HR system to Suffolk County Council. On-going roll out of Office 2016 and Windows 10 to all teams, to keep abreast of latest software releases. Whilst these projects have been implemented, work continues to ensure we make best use of the new functionality available.

5. Conclusion

- 5.1 Progress has been made across the range of teams, notably in relation to the implementation of the All Together programme of work, and supporting business as usual activity across the organisation throughout a significant period of change. Focus will now shift so that we prioritise some key issues of work that will enable us to continue our journey of improvements, including an update and refresh of the customer access strategy, optimisation of CONNECT, review of our programme and project management function and the development of our working relationship with our partners Suffolk CC IT to ensure our IT is fit for purpose and ambitious in outlook.