

# Overview and Scrutiny



## Overview and Scrutiny Committee Agenda

Thursday, 9 September 2021

**7.00 pm**, Council Chamber - the public are welcome to observe via the Council's website at <https://lewisham.public-i.tv/core/portal/home>

Civic Suite

Lewisham Town Hall

London SE6 4RU

For more information contact: Charlotte Dale (020 8314 8286)

This meeting is an open meeting and all items on the agenda may be audio recorded and/or filmed.

### Part 1

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# Overview and Scrutiny Committee Members

Members of the committee, listed below, are summoned to attend the meeting to be held on Thursday, 9 September 2021.

Kim Wright, Chief Executive  
Wednesday, 1 September 2021

Councillor Paul Maslin (Chair)

Councillor Octavia Holland (Vice-Chair)

Councillor Obajimi Adefiranye

Councillor Tauseef Anwar

Councillor Peter Bernards

Councillor Bill Brown

Councillor Juliet Campbell

Councillor Suzannah Clarke

Councillor Liam Curran

Councillor Sophie Davis

Councillor Colin Elliott

Councillor Aisling Gallagher

Councillor Leo Gibbons

Councillor Alan Hall

Councillor Carl Handley

Councillor Coral Howard

Councillor Mark Ingleby

Councillor Liz Johnston-Franklin

Councillor Caroline Kalu

Councillor Silvana Kelleher  
Councillor Louise Krupski  
Councillor Samantha Latouche  
Councillor Jack Lavery  
Councillor Jim Mallory  
Councillor Joan Millbank  
Councillor Hilary Moore  
Councillor Pauline Morrison  
Councillor John Muldoon  
Councillor Olurotimi Ogunbadewa  
Councillor Rachel Onikosi  
Councillor Lionel Openshaw  
Councillor Jacq Paschoud  
Councillor John Paschoud  
Councillor Stephen Penfold  
Councillor James Rathbone  
Councillor Joani Reid  
Councillor James Royston  
Councillor Sakina Sheikh  
Councillor Jonathan Slater  
Councillor Alan Smith  
Councillor Luke Sorba  
Councillor Eva Stamirowski  
Councillor James-J Walsh  
Councillor Susan Wise



## MINUTES OF THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Tuesday, 10 November 2020 at 7.00 pm

PRESENT: Councillors Bill Brown (Chair), Sophie Davis (Vice-Chair), Obajimi Adefiranye, Tauseef Anwar, Peter Bernards, Juliet Campbell, Suzannah Clarke, Patrick Codd, Liam Curran, Aisling Gallagher, Alan Hall, Carl Handley, Octavia Holland, Sue Hordijkeno, Mark Ingleby, Liz Johnston-Franklin, Caroline Kalu, Silvana Kelleher, Louise Krupski, Jim Mallory, Paul Maslin, Joan Millbank, Pauline Morrison, John Muldoon, Olurotimi Ogunbadewa, Lionel Openshaw, Jacq Paschoud, John Paschoud, Kim Powell, James Rathbone, Luke Sorba, Eva Stamirowski, James-J Walsh and Susan Wise

APOLOGIES: Councillors Colin Elliott, Coral Howard, Hilary Moore and Stephen Penfold

ALSO PRESENT: Charlotte Dale (Overview and Scrutiny Manager), Mayor Damien Egan (Mayor), Kim Wright (Chief Executive) and Georgina Nunney (Principal Lawyer)

### 1. Minutes of the meetings held on 5 March 2020 and 15 July 2020

1.1 **RESOLVED:** That the minutes of the meetings held on 5 March and 15 July 2020 be agreed as an accurate records of the meetings.

### 2. Declarations of Interest

2.1 No declarations of interest were made.

### 3. Responses from Mayor and Cabinet

3.1 **RESOLVED:** That the responses to the referrals made by the Committee at its January and March meetings be noted.

### 4. Scrutiny update

4.1 The Chair invited the Chairs of Select Committees to give a brief oral update on the work of their committees. The Select Committee Chairs advised that:

#### Children and Young People Select Committee

- Scrutinising the Children's Social Care Improvement Plan was a key piece of work for the Committee and Members were keen to ensure that the necessary resources were available to enable the department to meet the standards set by Ofsted and deserved by the borough's children and young people.
- Other key areas of work included (a) monitoring the reform of early help services in order to strengthen these services; (b) examining the three year

programme to raise the educational attainment levels of pupils of Afro-Caribbean heritage; (c) elective home education which had increased since the pandemic began; and (d) the effects on kids of school closure and reopening.

- Sir Norman Lamb, Chair of the South London and Maudsley NHS Trust, had been invited to the next meeting to discuss CAMHS (Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services) waiting times.
- The Chair, as part of his Business Panel role, had also been involved in scrutinising education related contracts including catering in schools.

### **Safer, Stronger Communities Select Committee**

At the next meeting of the Committee on 1 December, Members Plan to consider the following matters:

- Hearing from the Borough Commander; discussing the IOPC (Independent Office for Police Conduct) recommendations on stop and search; and asking questions about the implementation of recommendations arising from the Committee's review of stop and search.
- Receiving the mayoral response to the recommendations of the Committee's review into equalities.

At its January meeting, the Committee plan to look at the Youth Offending Service and Members of the Children and Young People Select Committee would be invited to attend.

### **Healthier Communities Select Committee**

At its next meeting the Committee plan to look at three key topics:

- Budget cuts
- Pathology arrangements (including the viability of the new provider)
- The Birmingham and Lewisham BAME Health Inequalities Review (so the Committee could be involved at the scoping stage).

### **Public Accounts Select Committee**

It had been a difficult year in terms of council finances as a result of the cost of responding to the Covid pandemic and other pressures, on the back of ten years of central government austerity measures. The Committee had:

- Encouraged the adoption of a more commercial approach across the Council and produced a comprehensive report with recommendations.
- Agreed to focus its next meeting on the budget, with the Chair of each Select Committee invited to attend to present their committee's views on the budget proposals falling within their remit. Assessing the impact of each proposal on service users would be important.

### **Housing Select Committee**

The Committee would be focusing on budget proposals relating to housing at its next meeting. Changes to the Council's housing allocation policies were also a key area of work for the committee.

### **Sustainable Development Select Committee**

The proposed Railway Children Urban National Park was an important area of work for the Committee because Members felt it was a great opportunity to support a number of council priorities including those around climate change, flood prevention, housing and clean air. The Committee was concerned that several

parts of the proposed park were being threatened by developers and had urged the Council to take all necessary legal action to prevent this.

Cllr Hall asked the Chair of the Sustainable Development Select Committee If ward Members could be provided with the relevant documentation in relation to the visioning report on Bell Green being considered by his Committee and the Chair agreed to remind officers that ward members would need this in relation to the scheduled briefing.

4.2 **RESOLVED:** That the updates be noted.

## 5. Question and Answer Session with the Mayor

5.1 The Chair welcomed the Mayor to the meeting and reported that written responses to questions submitted by Members in advance of the meeting had been published on a supplementary agenda and circulated.

5.2 The Mayor made the following introductory comments:

- These were unprecedented times but the Council had responded rapidly to the pandemic.
- The Council, residents and local businesses had very little warning before life changed overnight, which had been difficult.
- A new, second national lockdown was now in place until at least 2 December 2020.
- Locally, the numbers testing positive had been rising but was now stabilising at around 100 per 100000.
- News of a potential vaccine was encouraging and the Mayor and Chief Executive had met with other London leaders to discuss the potential roll out, as this was likely to be a critical role for the Council.
- There were many positives in the response to the pandemic, including the role played by Community Connections in getting food and essential supplies to vulnerable residents. The Voluntary and Community Sector had worked closely with the council in a range of different areas to meet challenges and support vulnerable residents.
- £34k had been raised by the Mayoresses to help provide free school meals over the October half term.
- The work on Covid and BAME health inequalities being carried out with Birmingham was vital.
- Covid champions were being recruited.
- The Budget situation was tough and sobering. It was hoped that the thematic approach being taken this year would be helpful. The focus was on the immediate budget gap for the next financial year of £18m, with further cuts being brought forward in January for Members to consider.
- The Council would continue to lobby central government for more funds to meet the costs of the pandemic.
- The Council's initial Covid 19 recovery plan had been shared with Members.
- A small number of Councillors were working on developing a race equality commission.

5.3 The following questions and responses were heard:

*How has Covid affected housing building programme and how is the funding gap in terms of homelessness following the end of the national 'Everyone In' strategy being addressed (i.e. the impact of the government stopping funding the homelessness services that they funded during 'Everyone In')?*

- There have been completions on new housing and the Council's plans remain ambitious. Some projects have been put back by the pandemic and during the first lockdown some planners were redeployed to support critical services. The Government have made some changes to funding arrangements which we need to look into and we will provide feedback on this to Members. Councillor Bell is working on homelessness and will update Members. We are still getting lots of approaches and information will be provided on the funding gap.

*The approach to the budget should consider prevention over cure*

- Absolutely, early intervention and support, especially to families is very important.

*Who is the Council's statutory scrutiny officer? Why was the Mayor's portfolio amended, why was planning allocated to Councillor Bell and how was responsibility handed over in terms of the larger developments?*

- Salena Mulhere, Assistant Chief Executive, is the Council's statutory scrutiny officer. It was always the intention to hand over responsibility for planning to the cabinet member with the housing portfolio during the course of administration; as it sits well with that portfolio and doing it during the course of the administration would allow a managed transition once the initial, crucial negotiations had taken place. In addition, the Mayor's role in terms of the impact of Covid meant that less time could be dedicated to the planning brief, which wasn't ideal. However, the Mayor is still involved in all the major developments.

*What is the status of the Bakerloo line extension (BLE) programme; how secure is it going forward, what is the Transport for London funding situation; and how will we push for what is best for our residents in terms of transport?*

- The BLE project is worth the investment and we want it to come to Lewisham and beyond to Bromley. We understand the pressures Transport for London is being put under by the Government; and we are working with The London Borough of Southwark to secure that line and that route. We expect delays due to the pandemic but it is crucial that we continue to lobby and campaign for the BLE.

*What are the implications of the comprehensive spending review for Lewisham?*

- In 2010 the Council's budget was 400m in real terms and today it is 230m and central government wants an extra 40m. The impact of

budget reductions is felt in every single area and we have half the staff we used to have. We would love to do more in terms of youth services and wrap around services for young people but funding reductions mean we cannot. These funding reductions do not make financial sense in the long term, as prevention is better than cure and early intervention works.

*Please can you look into various issues relating to the Railway Children Urban National Park as a Tree Preservation Order is needed, alongside other safeguards including the recognition of priority habitats and the acceptance of the Gove Park Neighbourhood Plan.*

- The proposed park is fully supported by the Council and we will take action in relation to illegal activity. There are resource issues but we are working through all the necessary actions.

*BAME inequality has been highlighted recently via the Black Lives Matter movement and the relatively high number of Covid deaths in the Black community. How can the Council take positive action?*

- Covid has shone a light on BAME inequalities nationally. We must reflect on what we are doing and what more we can do. We have a new online resource which outlines what we are doing to support BAME residents. We are also taking part in ground-breaking work with Birmingham on African and Caribbean health inequalities. There is still race inequality across many areas of society, including schools – Rathfern Primary School is leading on work to ensure that our schools have more diverse materials and a decolonised curriculum. In terms of recruitment, 46% of our senior management are from a BAME background and we have a BAME leadership academy. Our public health approach to serious youth violence is also working to address the overrepresentation of black boys in the criminal system.

*What is the cost of reconfiguring the Lewisham and Lee Green Low Traffic Neighbourhood scheme?*

- This will be provided.

*The Youth First contract needs to be financially viable*

- The Council is proud that it still funds a youth service, even if it can't fund it as much as it would like to. All services are under scrutiny due to the budget but concerns around viability are understood.

5.4 It was noted that CPZs were under consideration in the budget papers due to be considered by the select committees and that the widespread implementation of CPZs was being considered across the borough.

5.5 **RESOLVED:** That a referral be made to Mayor and Cabinet requesting further information on the following issues:

- Street homelessness prevention project – an update on how the funding gap is being managed.
- The figure for the cost of reconfiguring the Lewisham and Lee Green Low Traffic Neighbourhood scheme.

- The Council's BAME career progression programme – further information.

The meeting ended at 8.10 pm

Chair:

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Date:

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# MINUTES OF THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Wednesday, 26 May 2021 at 7.50 pm

PRESENT: Councillors Obajimi Adefiranye, Tauseef Anwar, Peter Bernards, Bill Brown, Juliet Campbell, Suzannah Clarke, Patrick Codd, Liam Curran, Sophie Davis, Colin Elliott, Aisling Gallagher, Leo Gibbons, Alan Hall, Carl Handley, Octavia Holland, Coral Howard, Mark Ingleby, Liz Johnston-Franklin, Caroline Kalu, Silvana Kelleher, Louise Krupski, Samantha Latouche, Jack Lavery, Jim Mallory, Paul Maslin, Joan Millbank, Hilary Moore, Pauline Morrison, John Muldoon, Olurotimi Ogunbadewa, Rachel Onikosi, Lionel Openshaw, Jacq Paschoud, John Paschoud, Stephen Penfold, James Rathbone, Joani Reid, James Royston, Sakina Sheikh, Alan Smith, Luke Sorba, Eva Stamirowski, James-J Walsh and Susan Wise

## 1. OSC Election of Chair

RESOLVED: that Councillor Paul Maslin be elected as Chair and Councillor Octavia Holland be elected as Vice Chair for the Municipal Year 2021-2022.

## 2. OSC Composition

RESOLVED: That the proposed current proportional allocation of Chairs and Vice-Chairs of Select Committees be approved.

## 3. OSC Select Committees

RESOLVED: that the following appointments be made:

|   |  |
|---|--|
| <i>Overview &amp; Scrutiny Committee<br/>(all 44 non-executive councillors)</i> | <b>Councillor Paul Maslin (New Cross) (Chair)</b><br><b>Councillor Octavia Holland (Lee Green) (Vice-Chair)</b>  |
| <i>Business Panel &amp; O&amp;S (Education) Business Panel (10)</i>             | <b>Councillor Paul Maslin (New Cross) (Chair)</b><br><b>Councillor Octavia Holland (Lee Green) (Vice-Chair)</b><br>Councillor Peter Bernards (Forest Hill)<br>Councillor Juliet Campbell (Blackheath)<br>Councillor Pat Codd (Lewisham Central)<br>Councillor Louise Krupski (Rushey Green)<br>Councillor John Muldoon (Rushey Green)<br>Councillor Joan Millbank (Telegraph Hill)<br>Councillor Luke Sorba (Telegraph Hill)<br>Councillor Susan Wise (Perry Vale) |

|  |  |
|--|--|
| <i>Public Accounts</i><br>(6)                  | <b>Councillor Pat Codd (Lewisham Central) (Chair)</b><br><b>Councillor Alan Hall (Bellingham) (Vice-Chair)</b><br>Councillor Jim Mallory (Lee Green)<br>Councillor Joan Millbank (Telegraph Hill)<br>Councillor Joani Reid (Lewisham Central)<br>Councillor James Royston (Catford South)  |
| <i>Healthier Communities</i><br>(6)            | <b>Councillor John Muldoon (Rushey Green) (Chair)</b><br><b>Councillor Coral Howard (Downham) (Vice-Chair)</b><br>Councillor Sophie Davis (Forest Hill)<br>Councillor Carl Handley (Ladywell)<br>Councillor Samantha Latouche (New Cross)<br>Councillor Lionel Openshaw (Evelyn)   |
| <i>Children &amp; Young People</i><br>(8)      | <b>Councillor Luke Sorba (Telegraph Hill) (Chair)</b><br><b>Councillor Caroline Kalu (Evelyn) (Vice-Chair)</b><br>Councillor Colin Elliott (Grove Park)<br>Councillor Octavia Holland (Lee Green)<br>Councillor Liz Johnston-Franklin (Ladywell)<br>Councillor Jack Lavery (Sydenham)<br>Councillor Hilary Moore (Grove Park)<br>Councillor Jacq Paschoud (Bellingham) |
| <i>Safer &amp; Stronger Communities</i><br>(6) | <b>Councillor Juliet Campbell (Blackheath) (Chair)</b><br><b>Councillor James Rathbone (Lee Green) (Vice-Chair)</b><br>Councillor Bill Brown (Ladywell)<br>Councillor Liam Curran (Sydenham)<br>Councillor Pauline Morrison (Crofton Park)<br>Councillor Rachel Onikosi (Bellingham)   |
| <i>Sustainable Development</i><br>(6)          | <b>Councillor Louise Krupski (Rushey Green) (Chair)</b><br><b>Councillor James Walsh (Rushey Green) (Vice-Chair)</b><br>Councillor Jimi Adefiranye (Brockley)<br>Councillor Suzannah Clarke (Grove Park)<br>Councillor Leo Gibbons (Forest Hill)<br>Councillor Mark Ingleby (Whitefoot)  |
| <i>Housing</i><br>(6)                          | <b>Councillor Peter Bernards (Forest Hill) (Chair)</b><br><b>Councillor Stephen Penfold (Brockley) (Vice-Chair)</b><br>Councillor Tauseef Anwar (Crofton Park)<br>Councillor Aisling Gallagher (Lewisham Central)<br>Councillor Olurotimi Ogunbadewa (Downham)<br>Councillor Silvana Kelleher (Evelyn)   |

#### 4. Task and Finish Groups

RESOLVED: that the following appointments be made:

|   |  |
|---|--|
| <i>Improving Digital Inclusion</i><br>(5)       | Cllr Jacq Paschoud<br>Cllr John Paschoud<br>Cllr Joan Millbank<br>Cllr James Walsh<br>Cllr Samantha Latouche       |
| <i>Improving Wi-fi Access</i><br>(5)            | Cllr Colin Elliott<br>Cllr Paul Maslin<br>Cllr Jimi Adefiranye<br>Cllr Caroline Kalu<br>Cllr Liz Johnston-Franklin |
| <i>Retrofitting and Insulating Homes</i><br>(5) | Cllr Louise Krupski<br>Cllr Pat Codd<br>Cllr Aisling Gallagher<br>Cllr Tauseef Anwar<br>Cllr Stephen Penfold       |

Chair:

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Date:

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# MINUTES OF THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Wednesday, 21 July 2021 at 8.00 pm

PRESENT: Councillors Obajimi Adefiranye, Tauseef Anwar, Peter Bernards, Juliet Campbell, Suzannah Clarke, Liam Curran, Colin Elliott, Aisling Gallagher, Leo Gibbons, Alan Hall, Carl Handley, Octavia Holland, Coral Howard, Mark Ingleby, Liz Johnston-Franklin, Caroline Kalu, Silvana Kelleher, Louise Krupski, Samantha Latouche, Jack Lavery, Jim Mallory, Paul Maslin, Joan Millbank, Hilary Moore, Pauline Morrison, John Muldoon, Olurotimi Ogunbadewa, Rachel Onikosi, Lionel Openshaw, Jacq Paschoud, John Paschoud, Stephen Penfold, James Rathbone, Joani Reid, James Royston, Jonathan Slater, Alan Smith, Luke Sorba, Eva Stamirowski, James-J Walsh and Susan Wise

APOLOGIES: Councillor Sakina Sheikh

## 1. OSC Sub Committee Appointments

RESOLVED: that

(1) Councillor Mark Ingleby replace Councillor Pat Codd as a member of the Public Accounts Select Committee;

(2) A replacement for Councillor Pat Codd on the Housing Retrofit Task and Finish Group be considered at the September meeting of the Committee.

## 2. OSC Select Committee Chair

RESOLVED: that the Public Accounts Select Committee be notified of the allocation of Chair of the Select Committee to Councillor Mark Ingleby.

The meeting closed at 9.35pm

Chair:

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Date:

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## Overview and Scrutiny Committee

### Declarations of Interest

**Date:** 09 September 2021

**Key decision:** No

**Class:** Part 1

**Ward(s) affected:** All

**Contributors:** Chief Executive (Director of Law and Governance)

### Outline and recommendations

Members are asked to declare any personal interest they have in any item on the agenda.

## 1. Summary

- 1.1. Members must declare any personal interest they have in any item on the agenda. There are three types of personal interest referred to in the Council's Member Code of Conduct:
  - (1) Disclosable pecuniary interests
  - (2) Other registerable interests
  - (3) Non-registerable interests.
- 1.2. Further information on these is provided in the body of this report.

## 2. Recommendation

- 2.1. Members are asked to declare any personal interest they have in any item on the agenda.

### 3. Disclosable pecuniary interests

3.1 These are defined by regulation as:

- (a) Employment, trade, profession or vocation of a relevant person\* for profit or gain
- (b) Sponsorship –payment or provision of any other financial benefit (other than by the Council) within the 12 months prior to giving notice for inclusion in the register in respect of expenses incurred by you in carrying out duties as a member or towards your election expenses (including payment or financial benefit from a Trade Union).
- (c) Undischarged contracts between a relevant person\* (or a firm in which they are a partner or a body corporate in which they are a director, or in the securities of which they have a beneficial interest) and the Council for goods, services or works.
- (d) Beneficial interests in land in the borough.
- (e) Licence to occupy land in the borough for one month or more.
- (f) Corporate tenancies – any tenancy, where to the member’s knowledge, the Council is landlord and the tenant is a firm in which the relevant person\* is a partner, a body corporate in which they are a director, or in the securities of which they have a beneficial interest.
- (g) Beneficial interest in securities of a body where:
  - (a) that body to the member’s knowledge has a place of business or land in the borough; and
  - (b) either:
    - (i) the total nominal value of the securities exceeds £25,000 or 1/100 of the total issued share capital of that body; or
    - (ii) if the share capital of that body is of more than one class, the total nominal value of the shares of any one class in which the relevant person\* has a beneficial interest exceeds 1/100 of the total issued share capital of that class.

\*A relevant person is the member, their spouse or civil partner, or a person with whom they live as spouse or civil partner.

### 4. Other registerable interests

4.1 The Lewisham Member Code of Conduct requires members also to register the following interests:

- (a) Membership or position of control or management in a body to which you were appointed or nominated by the Council
- (b) Any body exercising functions of a public nature or directed to charitable purposes, or whose principal purposes include the influence of public opinion or policy, including any political party
- (c) Any person from whom you have received a gift or hospitality with an estimated value of at least £25.

## 5. Non registerable interests

- 5.1. Occasions may arise when a matter under consideration would or would be likely to affect the wellbeing of a member, their family, friend or close associate more than it would affect the wellbeing of those in the local area generally, but which is not required to be registered in the Register of Members' Interests (for example a matter concerning the closure of a school at which a Member's child attends).

## 6. Declaration and impact of interest on members' participation

- 6.1. Where a member has any registerable interest in a matter and they are present at a meeting at which that matter is to be discussed, they must declare the nature of the interest at the earliest opportunity and in any event before the matter is considered. The declaration will be recorded in the minutes of the meeting. If the matter is a disclosable pecuniary interest the member must take no part in consideration of the matter and withdraw from the room before it is considered. They must not seek improperly to influence the decision in any way. **Failure to declare such an interest which has not already been entered in the Register of Members' Interests, or participation where such an interest exists, is liable to prosecution and on conviction carries a fine of up to £5000**
- 6.2. Where a member has a registerable interest which falls short of a disclosable pecuniary interest they must still declare the nature of the interest to the meeting at the earliest opportunity and in any event before the matter is considered, but they may stay in the room, participate in consideration of the matter and vote on it unless paragraph 6.3 below applies.
- 6.3. Where a member has a registerable interest which falls short of a disclosable pecuniary interest, the member must consider whether a reasonable member of the public in possession of the facts would think that their interest is so significant that it would be likely to impair the member's judgement of the public interest. If so, the member must withdraw and take no part in consideration of the matter nor seek to influence the outcome improperly.
- 6.4. If a non-registerable interest arises which affects the wellbeing of a member, their, family, friend or close associate more than it would affect those in the local area generally, then the provisions relating to the declarations of interest and withdrawal apply as if it were a registerable interest.
- 6.5. Decisions relating to declarations of interests are for the member's personal judgement, though in cases of doubt they may wish to seek the advice of the Monitoring Officer.

## 7. Sensitive information

- 7.1. There are special provisions relating to sensitive interests. These are interests the disclosure of which would be likely to expose the member to risk of violence or intimidation where the Monitoring Officer has agreed that such interest need not be registered. Members with such an interest are referred to the Code and advised to seek advice from the Monitoring Officer in advance.

## 8. Exempt categories

- 8.1. There are exemptions to these provisions allowing members to participate in decisions notwithstanding interests that would otherwise prevent them doing so. These include:-
- (a) Housing – holding a tenancy or lease with the Council unless the matter relates to your particular tenancy or lease; (subject to arrears exception)
  - (b) School meals, school transport and travelling expenses; if you are a parent or

guardian of a child in full time education, or a school governor unless the matter relates particularly to the school your child attends or of which you are a governor

- (c) Statutory sick pay; if you are in receipt
- (d) Allowances, payment or indemnity for members
- (e) Ceremonial honours for members
- (f) Setting Council Tax or precept (subject to arrears exception).

## **9. Report author and contact**

- 9.1. Stephen Gerrard, Director of Law and Governance, [stephen.gerrard@lewisham.gov.uk](mailto:stephen.gerrard@lewisham.gov.uk), 020 83147648



## Overview and Scrutiny Committee

### Response to Overview and Scrutiny Committee - requests for further information

**Date:** 09 September 2021

**Key decision:** No

**Class:** Part 1

**Ward(s) affected:** All

**Contributors:** Assistant Chief Executive

### Outline and recommendations

This report provides the response agreed at Mayor and Cabinet on 13 January 2021 to requests for further information made at the meetings of Overview & Scrutiny Committee (OSC) held on 10 November 2020.

## 1. Summary

- 1.1. This report informs Members of the response agreed at Mayor and Cabinet on 13 January 2021 to a request for further information made by the Committee at its meeting held on 10 November 2021.

## 2. Recommendation

- 2.1. The Committee is recommended to receive and note the Mayor & Cabinet response to its referrals.

## 3. Response

- 3.1. The Mayor and Cabinet considered the attached report at the Mayor & Cabinet meeting held on 12 January 2021. The Mayor and Cabinet unanimously resolved that the response be approved and forwarded to the Committee.

## 4. Financial implications

- 4.1. There are no direct financial implications arising from this report.

## 5. Legal implications

5.1. There are no direct legal implications arising from this report.

## **6. Equalities implications**

6.1. There are no direct equalities implications arising from this report.

## **7. Climate change and environmental implications**

7.1. There are no direct climate change or environmental implications arising from this report.

## **8. Crime and disorder implications**

8.1. There are no direct crime and disorder implications arising from this report.

## **9. Health and wellbeing implications**

9.1. There are no direct health and wellbeing implications arising from this report.

## **10. Glossary**

| <b>Term</b>                     | <b>Definition</b>   |
|---------------------------------|---|
| Overview & Scrutiny             | Overview and scrutiny is the way in which Mayor and Cabinet (the 'Executive'), officers and external organisations are held to account for the decisions that they make. It is led by councillors who are not members of the Executive. They also influence policy development and investigate issues of local concern, making recommendations for improvement. |
| Overview and Scrutiny Committee | A committee made up of all non-executive councillors which carries out scrutiny focussing on strategic and cross cutting issues.  |
| Mayor and Cabinet               | Mayor & Cabinet (otherwise known as the 'Executive') consists of the Mayor and between two and nine Cabinet Members, who are appointed by the Mayor.  |

## **11. Background Papers**

Mayor & Cabinet Minutes of 21 January 2021

## **12. Report author and contact**

12.1. Charlotte Dale, Head of Overview and Scrutiny, 0208 31 48286, [charlotte.dale@lewisham.gov.uk](mailto:charlotte.dale@lewisham.gov.uk)



## Mayor and Cabinet

### **Response to Overview and Scrutiny Committee - requests for further information**

**Date:** 13 January 2021

**Key decision:** No

**Class:** Part 1

**Ward(s) affected:** All

**Contributors:** Assistant Chief Executive

### **Outline and recommendations**

This report provides responses to requests for further information at the meeting of Overview & Scrutiny Committee held on 10 November 2020.

Mayor & Cabinet is asked to note the responses from officers and agree that they be submitted to the Overview & Scrutiny Committee.

## 1. Summary

- 1.1. This report provides responses to requests for further information at the meeting of Overview & Scrutiny Committee (OSC) held on 10 November 2020.

## 2. Recommendation

- 2.1. Mayor & Cabinet is asked to note the responses from officers and agree that they be submitted to the Overview & Scrutiny Committee.

## 3. Requests for further information

- 3.1. Overview & Scrutiny Committee asked for an update on the Council's work on homelessness following the end of the national 'Everyone In' strategy, and the impact that the Government stopping funding for this homelessness service has had.
- 3.2. In March 2020, the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) and Public Health England advised that shared space homeless shelters should be closed due to COVID-19, and that individuals sleeping rough should be moved into self-contained accommodation. This was known as 'Everyone In'. Since 'Everyone In' was announced, the Council's Rough Sleeping Team has worked with over 200 rough sleepers, which is an unprecedented number. 'Everyone In' ended on 24 June 2020. To provide next steps for those brought in under the scheme, as of 16 December 2020 the Council has settled 127 people in settled accommodation: 87 were moved into private rented sector (PRS) accommodation, 27 into supported housing, and 13 in other accommodation and/or reconnected with other boroughs/connections. A further 85 people have been placed in temporary accommodation.
- 3.3. The Council has received £479,000 in funding from MHCLG for projects to tackle homelessness over the course of winter 2020/21. The aim of these projects is to ensure those brought in under 'Everyone In' do not return to the streets. The Council is using this funding to: move rough sleepers brought in under 'Everyone In' into long-term accommodation, such as PRS, supported housing and the Housing First service; recruit two new staff members to the Rough Sleeping Team to enhance the borough's outreach offer to support new rough sleepers and help them into long-term accommodation; and secure emergency accommodation when the Severe Weather Emergency Protocol (SWEP) is activated to ensure those on the streets have a place to stay when there is severe weather during winter. The Council has secured a further £90,000 from MHCLG for specific cold weather funding, which will be used to help secure longer-term accommodation for those brought in as part of SWEP and to provide medical consultations for rough sleepers, ensuring GP support can be provided for those accommodated via SWEP who are not registered with a GP in the borough and may require an urgent health appointment.
- 3.4. The Council has received £2.3m in funding from the GLA for long-term accommodation projects. £2.1m is being used as capital funding whereby the Council will purchase and develop a location in Lewisham to provide long-term accommodation to support 16 rough sleepers and single people at risk of homelessness in self-contained and COVID-compliant shared accommodation, which will be offered pending a move into permanent housing. £200,000 is being used to recruit an additional officer to the Rough Sleeping Team for four years. The role will assess and support individuals' specific needs, in order to develop move-on plans for them in to suitable long-term accommodation.
- 3.5. In November 2020, separate from the funding detailed above, the Council mobilised a 'targeted rough sleeper pathway' as an alternative to a night shelter offer. This service is being delivered jointly by Lewisham Council and two non-commissioned supported housing providers in the borough. This has created an additional 24 supported housing

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units, ring-fenced for rough sleepers. Access to these units is directly from the street for verified rough sleepers with a local Lewisham connection. This cohort will be supported to move onto the most suitable longer term options, including PRS, supported housing, and Housing First accommodation.

- 3.6. Overview & Scrutiny Committee asked for the figure of the cost of reconfiguring the Lewisham and Lee Green Low Traffic Neighbourhood scheme.
- 3.7. Listening to feedback from local residents and ward councillors, the Council made some changes to the Lewisham and Lee Green Low Traffic Neighbourhood in November 2020. The cost of making these changes was £22,000 which was funded by Transport for London through the London Streetspace Programme.
- 3.8. Overview & Scrutiny Committee asked for more information on the Council's BAME career progression programme.
- 3.9. The management development programme for BAME staff was launched in October 2020. The original target was for 30 learners, however the Council was pleased to accept 34 members of staff onto the programme. The programme lasts between 18-27 months, and consists of the Chartered Management Institute Level 3 and 5 qualification interwoven with bespoke workshops, designed to equip participants with the knowledge and skills to be effective in their roles and help progress their careers at Lewisham Council. Of the 34 staff taking part, 16 are on level 5 and 18 are on level 3. The qualification element comes at no cost to the participants or the Council, as it is funded via the apprenticeship levy.

## 4. Financial implications

- 4.1. There are no financial implications arising from the updates in this report at this time. However, there may be financial implications in relation to the range of issues, proposals and plans referred to in this composite report as they are worked through and decisions made to put them into action. Financial implications will be provided individually on these specific matters at the appropriate time in line with the Council's constitution and control framework for committing spend.

## 5. Legal implications

- 5.1. There are no specific legal implications arising from the updates in this report at this time. However, there may be legal implications in relation to the range of issues, proposals and plans referred to in this composite report as they are worked through and decisions made to put them into action. Legal implications will be provided individually on those specific matters at the appropriate time.

## 6. Equalities implications

- 6.1. There are a range of equalities implications arising from the various responses provided for this report. The report makes reference to homelessness, improving air quality and the progression of BAME staff through the Council – which may impact on protected characteristics. In addition to this, socio-economic implications may arise for those who face disadvantage as a result of their income status. In due course, relevant implications will be provided as specific proposals are developed. As appropriate, any proposals that are taken forward will also be considered in light of the objectives of the Council's Comprehensive Equalities Scheme:
  - Tackling victimisation, discrimination and harassment
  - Improving access to services
  - Closing the gap in outcomes for our citizens

- Increasing mutual understanding and respect within and between communities
- Increasing participation and engagement

## **7. Climate change and environmental implications**

- 7.1. There are no specific environmental implications arising from the updates in this report at this time. However, there may be environmental implications in relation to the range of issues, proposals and plans referred to in this composite report as they are worked through and decisions made to put them into action. Environmental implications will be provided individually on these specific matters at the appropriate time.

## **8. Crime and disorder implications**

- 8.1. There are no specific crime and disorder implications arising from this report.

## **9. Health and wellbeing implications**

- 9.1. There are no specific health and wellbeing implications arising from this report.

## **10. Report author and contact**

- 10.1. James Noble, Head of Mayor's Office, [james.noble@lewisham.gov.uk](mailto:james.noble@lewisham.gov.uk)



## Overview and Scrutiny Committee

### Appointment to a Task and Finish Group

**Date:** 09 September 2021

**Key decision:** No

**Class:** Part 1

**Ward(s) affected:** All

**Contributors:** Assistant Chief Executive

### Outline and recommendations

This report asks Members to consider the appointment of a member to serve on an existing task and finish group

## 1. Summary

- 1.1. This report asks Members to consider the appointment of a member to serve on an existing task and finish group.

## 2. Recommendation

- 2.1. The Committee is recommended to appoint Councillor Sophie Davis to the Housing Retrofit Task and Finish Group.

## 3. Background

- 3.1. Councillor Codd is now a member of the Executive and can no longer serve on the Housing Retrofit Task and Finish Group. It is proposed that the place is filled by Councillor Sophie Davis.

## 4. Financial implications

- 4.1. There are no direct financial implications arising from this report.

## 5. Legal implications

- 5.1 The Council's Constitution provides at paragraph 6.11, Article 6 that the Overview and

Scrutiny Committee may from time to time appoint sub-committees, to be known as task and finish groups which will exist for a period of no less than 3 months, nor more than 12 months from the date of their creation. It further adds that “Any task and finish group shall consist of 5 members and be established for the purpose of examining a particular issue in depth. The terms of reference of any task and finish group shall be agreed by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee which shall also appoint members to it.”

## **6. Equalities implications**

6.1. There are no direct equalities implications arising from this report.

## **7. Climate change and environmental implications**

7.1. There are no direct climate change or environmental implications arising from this report.

## **8. Crime and disorder implications**

8.1. There are no direct crime and disorder implications arising from this report.

## **9. Health and wellbeing implications**

9.1. There are no direct health and wellbeing implications arising from this report.

## **10. Glossary**

| <b>Term</b>                     | <b>Definition</b>   |
|---------------------------------|---|
| Overview & Scrutiny             | Overview and scrutiny is the way in which Mayor and Cabinet (the ‘Executive’), officers and external organisations are held to account for the decisions that they make. It is led by councillors who are not members of the Executive. They also influence policy development and investigate issues of local concern, making recommendations for improvement. |
| Overview and Scrutiny Committee | A committee made up of all non-executive councillors which carries out scrutiny focussing on strategic and cross cutting issues.  |
| Task and Finish Group           | A time limited scrutiny body which gathers evidence in relation to a topical issue of concern in order to make recommendations to improve outcomes for residents.   |

## **11. Background Papers**

[Overview and Scrutiny Committee Minutes 21.07.21](#)

## **12. Report author and contact**

12.1. Charlotte Dale, Head of Overview and Scrutiny, 0208 31 48286, [charlotte.dale@lewisham.gov.uk](mailto:charlotte.dale@lewisham.gov.uk)



## Overview and Scrutiny

### Resident Experience

**Date:** 9 September 2021

**Key decision:** No

**Class:** Part 1

**Ward(s) affected:** All

**Contributors:** Assistant Chief Executive; Head of Insight, Transformation and Organisational Development; Director of IT and Digital Services; Head of Corporate Customer Relations

### Outline and recommendations

This report sets out an introduction to the Resident Experience Programme that will improve the experiences of our residents in their interactions with the Council.

Overview and Scrutiny is recommended to:

- Note the contents of this report;
- Hear from, and ask questions of, Matt Huxley (31Ten Consulting);
- Provide any pre-scrutiny and insight at this early scoping stage, focusing on these key questions:
  - What do our residents want from us?
  - What areas of good practice do we have currently (that could be replicated across the council)?
  - What should the priority areas for improving the resident experience be?
- Consider the options for further member engagement in the programme outlined in section 8.

## Timeline of engagement and decision-making

The intention to make a priority of resident experience was set out to Full Council in February 2020, though the programme of work was subsequently delayed by the pandemic.

This report to Overview and Scrutiny, and associated call for evidence, is the first formal engagement since.

### 1. Summary

- 1.1. This paper provides an introduction to the Resident Experience Programme that officers are currently scoping. This will be a cross-cutting programme of work relevant to all areas of the Council's business, and with substantial opportunity to improve outcomes and advance equality for the residents of Lewisham.

### 2. Recommendations

- 2.1. Overview and Scrutiny is recommended to:
  - Note the contents of this report;
  - Hear from, and ask questions of Matt Huxley and 31Ten Consulting;
  - Provide any pre-scrutiny and insight at this early scoping stage focusing on these key questions:
    - What do our residents want from us?
    - What areas of good practice do we have currently (that could be replicated across the council)?
    - What should the priority areas for improving the resident experience be?
  - Consider the options for further member engagement in the programme outlined in section 8.

### 3. Policy Context

- 3.1. This work will enable all priorities of the Corporate Strategy, most explicitly Open Lewisham, as well as the organisational priority from the Chief Executive's paper to Full Council February 2020 to improve our resident experience, and supports the work of our Future Lewisham ambition.
- 3.2. The Council's values shape interactions and behaviours across the organisational hierarchy, between officers, and members, between the council and partners and between the council and residents. In delivering our duties, we are guided by the Council's four core values:
  - We put service to the public first
  - We respect all people and all communities
  - We invest in employees
  - We are open, honest, and fair in all we do.

### 4. Background

- 4.1. At the Council, we use the term resident to refer to the people we serve in our borough. It is an informal use of the term resident as it includes the borough's homeless

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population, business owners, workers and school children who may or may not have a fixed, Lewisham, home address. It is our language of choice to distinguish the relationship we have with those who make use of our borough and its services from transactional 'customers', passive 'service-users', or other common terms applied.

- 4.2. Everything we do as an organisation is in service of our residents. Whether this is activity we are required to undertake by law (our statutory services), activity we choose to undertake based on historic practice, evidence of impact, and expertise (our discretionary services) or activity we undertake to enable the delivery of those statutory and discretionary services, or those of partners like schools (our corporate services).
- 4.3. In order to improve our ability to better understand and serve our residents, the Chief Executive's restructure in early 2020 created the new Assistant Chief Executive's division.
- 4.4. As part of this division, two new services have been established through a restructure of the division: the Programme Management Office established in September 2020 and the Insight, Transformation & Organisational Development service established in July 2021.
- 4.5. Since September 2020, the division has been introducing new practices that improve the outcomes delivered from projects and programmes, improve our ability to transform in a manner that improves outcomes for residents and take a more user-centred and insight-led approach to service delivery and change.
- 4.6. These changes have been introduced through a number of initiatives such as the PMO approach being used to manage the Medium Term Financial Strategy programme, Overview & Scrutiny Task & Finish groups and the delivery of various projects through the Change Network as part of the Together Lewisham programme.
- 4.7. The Resident Experience programme will build upon these to mainstream the new approach, focusing on delivering tangible outcomes for residents through user-centred and evidence-led delivery and encompass the culture change being led through the new Organisation Development strategy.
- 4.8. In February 2020, the Chief Executive outlined her key priorities for the organisation to Full Council. Amongst these was 'improving our residents' experience' which was articulated as follows:

"There is a need to improve the experiences of our residents, ensuring consistency and quality. We must focus on understanding residents' perspectives, shaping our services around their needs. We need to make better use of technology to improve our online self-serve options so people can access and use our services at times and places that suit them. We need to make the digital experience so good that residents make a choice to interact with us that way."
- 4.9. Our resident experience is essentially any interaction that residents have with the Council and its provision. It is closely aligned to the idea of customer experience, but with constraints and additional responsibilities not faced by the private sector and rooted in a closer two-way relationship with each other and the place. It is also important to recognise that while for some elements of our business we are operating side by side with the private sector, and therefore a good resident experience is likely to make us more competitive and where we can strive to be the organisation of choice, there are also elements of our work which only we provide, and it is these elements where residents do not have choice, but where the experience can make the difference in their outcomes, wellbeing and self-worth that it is especially important we get the experience right.
- 4.10. Our resident experience programme is also an opportunity to be explicit about our commitment to equalities and demonstrate the values and activity we have committed to through our Single Equality Framework. Improving our residents' experience is about

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moving towards best practice across the piece especially in relation to the experiences of residents with protected and other equalities characteristics and the specific barriers and challenges they may face, or which may disadvantage or marginalise them, in accessing our services. The programme will therefore be particularly focused on ensuring this is tackled, through inclusive design and coproduction with those with lived experiences.

## 5. Programme development

- 5.1. Since the meeting of Full Council where this was established as an organisational priority, the Covid-19 pandemic has expedited the use of digital channels and altered the resident/council/partner relationship. We have better insight through the Voices of Lewisham work of the impact of the pandemic on our residents and have felt the benefits of community action. There is an opportunity now to build on this and its momentum as part of delivering Future Lewisham.
- 5.2. This programme of work will also support the Medium Term Financial Strategy to continue to achieve cost savings and efficiencies through a sustainable operating model which also improves outcomes for our residents. This work is one of the strategic drivers for ensuring all change and transformation is delivered with the resident experience at its centre, and that everything we do as an organisation on a daily basis is to serve the needs of our residents with kindness and compassion and in the most effective and efficient way. All of this is key to enabling us to continue to meet the needs of our residents within the ever-reducing financial envelope.
- 5.3. We are already signatories of the local digital declaration, have an established staff-led improvement programme, and have restructured our corporate centre to support evidence-led service transformation. We are now in a position to use the opportunities this brings to redesign our services end-to-end, that are centred around meeting the needs of all our residents, tackling inequality through our service delivery and design, across organisational boundaries.
- 5.4. Now, officers in the newly formed Insight, Transformation & Organisational Development service are working with the Programme Management Office, IT & Digital services and Corporate Customer Relations to progress to scope and define 'Resident Experience' as a programme of work, alongside progressing some of the key enablers we already know we will need. This will involve:
  - Defining the scope of the programme and a business case for the discovery phase
  - Developing a service design process
  - Establishing a change and transformation framework
  - Undertaking customer access reviews
  - A comprehensive data review inclusive of our data management, platforms and active directory
  - Two pilots to engage with residents on our Customer Service Standards and Digital Strategy, drawing on similar work done by Hackney, Brighton, Croydon, Birmingham, Gloucestershire and Essex local authorities
- 5.5. Three key developing strategies relate closely to this programme of work – our Digital Strategy, Organisational Development Strategy and Customer Service Strategy – and will be amplified by it. We will use opportunities on the programme to improve these strategies and further their objectives, for example delivering two pilots for engaging with residents around our Customer Service Standards and Digital Strategy.
- 5.6. Whilst the scope of the programme will be established during the scoping and definition phase, it is proposed this will centre around the following workstreams:

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- **Culture: training** and skills, awareness, living the values, performance measures, service standards, continuous improvement
- **Service redesign:** process redesign, removing avoidable demand, organisational structure, blurring organisational boundaries, operating models
- **Enabling infrastructure:** IT and digital enabling technology, infrastructure performance, maintenance and support
- **Data and insight:** data cleansing, golden record, data management protocols, data sharing, user research, qualitative insight – understanding our residents
- **Comms and engagement:** behaviour change, channel shift, reframing the resident/council relationship, awareness, resident involvement
- **Programme management and collaboration:** governance, approach, resourcing, costs, risks, benefits management, funding opportunities, opportunities for collaborating with partners

## 6. Hearing from others

- 6.1. Matt Huxley and Rahul Rana from 31Ten Consulting have been invited to attend tonight's meeting to share their experience. They have been working with local authorities to develop and deliver improved resident experiences and facilitate discussions on a variety of topics such as an agile council. Their report "Service Transformation Savings Research" produced with London Councils is included at Appendix 2.
- 6.2. Lou Downe, the author of 'Good Services' is an expert in service design and how to ensure that services work well and are user focussed. Her work was recommended to us by the Local Government Association and Members may be interested in holding a session with Lou as part of taking the Council's resident experience work forward.

## 7. Next steps

- 7.1. The programme will be assured by the PMO and report into the Strategic Change Board. Programme governance will be set up as part of initiation. As one of the Chief Executive's priorities and a key organisational piece of work, the Chief Executive is the programme sponsor and strategic SRO, with the Director of Planning as operational SRO to delegate some activity to as required.
- 7.2. A call for evidence was sent to Overview & Scrutiny Members ahead of this meeting, the outcomes of which will be considered as part of the scoping and development of this programme. The feedback received is summarised in Appendix 1.
- 7.3. There will be an ongoing role for members to inform the evidence base for this work from their experiences working with and representing residents, as well as opportunities for resident engagement and coproduction, as part of our dual commitment to user-led design and improving equality through our work.
- 7.4. Members are especially well-placed to shape this work as it is about the relationship that the Council they oversee has with the residents they represent. Experiences and insights members have from casework, surgeries and wider resident engagement are critical to the evidence-led approach officers are taking.
- 7.5. Following this committee meeting, officers will complete the scoping activity and associated accelerators and pilots over the coming months with a view to having a fully scoped and defined programme in early 2022 to begin delivery in full.

## **8. Options for further Member engagement**

8.1. Overview and Scrutiny are requested to consider the following:

- Engaging Lou Downe for a session with Members and Senior Officers on designing good services for residents.
- Holding themed workshops, similar to those held in relation to the Medium Term Financial Strategy in late 2020, with Members to deep dive into various key topics of interest to help shape the scoping of this programme.

## **9. Financial implications**

9.1. There are opportunities, in improving our processes and structures around resident experience, to achieve cost savings, in line with the Medium Term Financial Strategy programme. This programme of work should result in a sustainable operating model, enabling us to continue to meet the needs of our residents within an ever-reducing financial envelope. Should Members wish to engage Lou Downe for a session on designing good services for residents, any associated costs could be met from the scrutiny budget.

## **10. Legal implications**

10.1. There are no direct legal implications arising from this report.

## **11. Equalities implications**

11.1. Improving our resident experience is about raising our standards for all residents and making sure that all interactions with the Council are positive, supportive, enabled and empowering. We have a diverse borough and need to take into account and design for the range of experiences and characteristics of our residents, mitigating barriers they may experience and reducing marginalisation through intelligent, inclusive design. This programme will actively engage with “seldom heard” residents as outlined in the democracy review.

## **12. Climate change and environmental implications**

12.1. There are opportunities, in improving our processes and structures around resident experience, to design with climate in mind and strive for reduced transport, printing and other high polluting and resource intensive approaches, delivering environmentally friendly alternatives wherever possible – e.g. through reduced need for paper contact and in-person appointments.

## **13. Crime and disorder implications**

13.1. There are no specific crime and disorder implications arising from this report.

## **14. Health and wellbeing implications**

14.1. There is an opportunity to improve the wellbeing of our residents through an improved experience engaging with the Council, particularly for those who have higher than average need to interact with the Council or who may have had negative experiences with bureaucracy in their engagement public sector agencies. This will be an active consideration of the programme.

## **15. Background papers**

15.1. [Chief Executive’s Paper on Organisational Priorities to Full Council February 2020](#)

## 16. Report author and contact

- 16.1. Atika Mohammed, Head of Insight, Transformation and Organisational Development,  
020 8314 3133, [Atika.Mohammed@lewisham.gov.uk](mailto:Atika.Mohammed@lewisham.gov.uk)

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## **Appendix 1: Summary of Member Feedback via the Call for evidence**

### **Examples of good practice/service already in the Council:**

Various examples of good service were mentioned including practice in highways, parks management, elections, waste management/street cleansing; planning objections; councillor casework.

### **The priority areas for improving the resident experience:**

A number of Members suggested that the 'digital by default' trend had resulted in residents sometimes finding it difficult to speak to a live individual when contacting the council, which might be a particular issue for the elderly or those with specific needs that make digital communication difficult. Some Members felt that the option to speak to a council officer should always be made available and that there should be more consistency and higher standards in staff answering phones, responding to voicemail messages; and emptying voicemail boxes when full. Others suggested that priority areas for improvement should be: information technology, including a more navigable and accessible website; creating a safer environment for residents; and ensuring *all* residents, including vulnerable adults; refugees and young people, had a good experience when contacting the council. Training in understanding residents' access issues, financial difficulties and so on, might assist.

### **Good practice from elsewhere that should be considered as part of the improvement programme:**

Suggestions included notable practice at Hackney which has a multidisciplinary customer service team which aims to improve customer journeys, manage customer access channels effectively and reduce costs; and has improved the way it provides digital services by examining and improving how residents register, login and reset passwords for particular digital services. Dorset County Council was also mentioned, which launched a programme in 2020 aiming to transform how they deliver services by rethinking services using co-design with residents and partners; making all services accessible; improving integrated travel options; delivering services in the right place, by making best physical and financial use of their estate; becoming an employer of choice and modernising the council so it is leaner, and more digital in the way it delivers services. A specific programme at Haringey council was also mentioned. In terms of good practice from the commercial world, Amazon was cited as a being a leader in customer service, where user experience is key. Amazon constantly tries to simplify its processes to improve the customer experience and reduce the number of customer contacts and complaints.

LONDON COUNCILS

# SERVICE TRANSFORMATION SAVINGS RESEARCH

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Draft Report v2  
SEPTEMBER 2020



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# 1. Executive summary

## 1.1. CONTEXT, AIMS AND APPROACH

London Councils and the Society of London Treasurers undertake a regular survey to look at the rolling four-year medium-term financial plans (MTFP) of the thirty-two local authorities across the capital. The most recent survey, conducted last year and updated in January, found that £1.9bn of savings are required over a four-year period across London and – for the fourth consecutive year – approximately half of the savings planned by London boroughs are earmarked as ‘service transformation’.

Given the well-documented failure of some major transformation programmes to deliver planned savings, this was identified as a potential risk. In consultation with London Councils, 31ten was commissioned to build on this process by carrying out an in-depth qualitative research programme with a group of four pilot councils. The focus was on:

- Identifying what boroughs mean by **service transformation and how they define it**
- Looking at drivers for **transformation, resourcing, and anticipated savings**
- Understanding the **challenges and risks** in delivering transformation-led savings programmes
- Gathering evidence of **successful service transformation and understanding the conditions that generate success**
- Identifying **common themes and approaches** and developing potential **opportunities for shared learning and collaboration**

There were four main elements to the approach:

### 1. Selecting and securing pilot councils

This was a decision factoring in the size of service transformation savings, transformation activity and maturity, the type of borough (to ensure a geographical and political spread), and willingness to engage.

### 2. Analysing data underpinning ‘service transformation’ savings

Analysis of future savings supporting each council's MTFP, focusing on the quantum of savings by service area and the types of projects making up the ‘service transformation’ saving total.

### 3. Structured interviews with key officers at pilot councils

A series of structured interviews with key officers involved in delivering service transformation – including chief executives, finance directors, HR/OD directors, strategy leads, service leads, and staff in central or corporate transformation teams.

### 4. Check and challenge of key themes

Summarising the findings and learning from each borough in a 'borough summary', which was then reviewed by each participating council and forms the basis of the themes that are reported in this document.

An executive summary of the main themes of the report can be found below.

## 1.2. TRANSFORMATION SAVINGS

The term 'service transformation saving' as used in the London Councils MTFP return was not commonly used across the pilot councils in a day-to-day operational sense. Instead, all the councils viewed transformation as something that should (and does) span across *all* the MTFP return categories, rather than its own separate, distinct activity. Nevertheless, service transformation savings consistently made up nearly 50% of the £1bn of known savings in London, ranging from 16% to 61% across the pilot councils. Reviewing the underpinning data highlighted two broad areas of activity with service transformation:

- **Transformation activity/savings** – these generally involve a redesign of how services are delivered to improve outcomes and achieve savings. There will usually be a dedicated project, team, or some dedicated investment to deliver the transformation.
- **Efficiency savings** – these are small changes to services or BAU to generate financial savings without changing outcomes; for example, small staff restructures, cost cutting, removing unfilled posts, capitalisation of costs etc. These changes are usually delivered within existing resources.

The majority of the value of savings (75%) fell into the former category, whilst the efficiency category tended to have more numerous but smaller value savings. For the pilot councils, five or six major transformation projects accounted for approximately 60-70% of the planned financial savings in the service transformation category, alongside a long list of smaller efficiency initiatives. The highest planned savings were consistently in Adult Social Care, Children's Social Care and Central/Corporate Services with these services comprising 66% of service transformation savings across the pilots.

There were two main drivers for transformation: to achieve savings and/or to improve service outcomes. These are not mutually exclusive and all four pilot councils sought to achieve both but the primary drivers were subtly different ranging from a need to move away from unsustainable salami-slicing to focussing on meeting customer expectations as the primary driver.

## 1.3. TRANSFORMATION JOURNEYS

Each pilot council spoke of the transformation journey that they have been and continue to be on. Across each of these journeys, there were some commonalities and consistent experiences, but each council's individual journey bore the unique hallmarks of their local context and circumstances.

All the councils highlighted the synergy between successful transformation and a strong, unifying cultural platform. The discussions shed light on how each council's journey was broadly non-linear and non-sequential, but involved a series of steps characterised by growth, change, development, raising awareness, increasing buy-in, building and embedding relationships, strengthening trust, learning tools and techniques, and ultimately evolving the cultural platform alongside the environment in which each council operates. Notable drivers and factors that marked the councils' transformation journeys involved the pursuit of and progress towards:

- A strong sense of collective responsibility to advance social justice and tackle inequalities
- A sense of local community within the organisation
- An emphasis on cross-council collaboration and collective learning
- A working culture blending pastoral care and staff wellbeing alongside high, stretching expectations
- A commitment to definitive action to increase workforce diversity and inclusivity.

#### 1.4. SUCCESSFUL TRANSFORMATION

Based on the structured interviews with key personnel at the four pilot councils and the feedback and learning that they shared, four clear themes emerged with a series of specific lessons, messages, advice and good practice that contribute towards effective, successful and lasting transformational change:

**Leadership:** inclusive, stable, and visionary

- Stable leadership and clear accountability – both politically and at office level, with clear lines of accountability and succession planning to mitigate against personnel changes and provide a stable basis
- Absorbing personnel changes through a widely understood vision – a clear strategic narrative also acts as a bulwark against any changes in personnel
- Strong political relationships – across the spectrum from the cabinet through to backbenchers and the minority party
- Inclusive and broad leadership – leadership distributed and exhibited across all levels, from the executive through to project managers and service leads, and broad staff involvement in designing and delivering change.

**Outcomes:** shifting mindsets and reframing purpose

- Focusing on outcomes as a basis for change – to provide a simple, clear framework that is easy to understand and secure organisational buy-in

- Focusing on outcomes to catalyse new thinking – as an impetus to explore new ideas, fresh modes of thinking and untested approaches with the primary goal of improving outcomes and the associated effect of driving change
- Improving financial awareness more broadly – awareness of the financial challenge and context should be council-wide and not solely rest with finance teams
- An iterative approach to benefits realisation - an agile, iterative approach to transformation allows for a more reliable way of tracking and realising benefits and preventing major failures.

**Approach:** test and learn builds confidence

- Strong collaboration and addressing silos – developing a strong culture of collaborative, cross-council working helps to address silos that can impede successful transformation
- Adopting your own version of agility and flexibility – working in an agile and flexible way as defined within the parameters and context of your own council
- Adopting a range of approaches helps to iterate – a wide-ranging toolkit of approaches that can be called on depending upon the transformation project or initiative in question.

**People:** it's all about relationships

- Supporting transformation from the centre – though not a prerequisite and not common to all, those councils with corporate transformation, PMO or change teams stressed the importance of such functions working as enablers for cross-council, service-driven change
- Transformation is everybody's business – successful transformation is far more difficult without services being critically involved in design, delivery, and benefits tracking
- Using external support when it is needed – external support can provide benchmarking and experience of success elsewhere, as well as injecting pace and capacity when needed, but ownership should always remain council-led.

## 1.5. BENEFITS REALISATION

The importance of buy-in from services to savings targets and benefits realisation was highlighted, as ownership from the service required to deliver the benefit is critical. The need to have a sound evidence base for the quantification of benefits was also emphasised, and initiatives that could test approaches and therefore develop an evidence base were viewed as providing a more reliable foundation than those based on estimates or top-down targets.

Some interviewees stated that there have been occasions when their council had been overly optimistic regarding the timing of the delivery of savings, with the reasons being an underestimate of the amount of change required or unrealistic assumptions, leading to a longer timeframe for the realisation of benefits.

The importance of avoiding these pitfalls was highlighted and the role of finance to challenge was seen as crucial for this.

Interviewees identified the importance of clear accountability for delivery, a detailed plan with actions and owners to achieve the savings, and the right resources to deliver the transformation. An agile or iterative approach to delivery was signalled as an effective means to avoiding large-scale failures, though the difficulties in governing such projects through the conventional local authority governance process was remarked upon.

The realisation of FTE savings was singled out as a particularly challenging area, and feedback on success was that it requires a measured approach with finance and the service area working together and releasing the saving once it has been proven that roles can be deleted.

## 1.6. FORWARD LOOK

Each pilot council reported that they were on track to deliver their MTFP savings before the onset of the Covid-19 pandemic – those who had small budget deficits were confident of meeting those by the end of the financial year. Covid-19 and the lockdown that was subsequently implemented in late March has had a wide-ranging financial impact on the pilot councils – a drop in commercial income through fees and charges, some increases in social care spending, and delays to transformation savings as staff were diverted to other priorities.

There were also some positives reported around organisational impact – the pandemic has kickstarted cultural change by forcing greater agility, quicker decision making and flatter hierarchies, as well as sharpening the focus on staff wellbeing. The interaction between councils and communities (both residents and businesses) has also witnessed a digital acceleration, with some services advancing a blended, mixed offer covering both online and safe face-to-face interaction. The compact between councils, community volunteers and community spaces has undergone a redefinition, with stronger links and better use of spaces, whilst working from home in an effective, sustainable way with staff wellbeing at its core is also at the forefront of the councils' future agendas, alongside working through any ensuing impacts on physical spaces and places.

Despite the uncertainty and volatility of current situation, the pilot councils remained committed to the goals and outcomes of their existing transformation programmes over the short-term. They acknowledged that the context in which they deliver has changed significantly and that some specific areas – such as a focus on economic recovery – were going to become increasingly central to the future direction of local transformation over the medium and long-term. Alongside this, there was an



acceptance that the timescales for some transformation initiatives that were previously underway were likely to be impacted and delayed by up to a year.

## 2. Introduction

### 2.1. BACKGROUND

London Councils, in conjunction with the Society of London Treasurers (SLT), regularly undertakes a survey looking at London boroughs' rolling four-year medium-term financial plans (MTFPs) to get a better understanding of the financial resilience of London boroughs at a time of significant pressure for local government. The survey undertaken in 2019 (updated in January 2020) found that £1.9bn of savings are required over four years across London and that for the fourth year in a row, roughly half of planned savings are planned to come from 'service transformation'. With the failure of some big and high-profile transformation programmes to deliver promised savings being well-documented across the sector, this was identified as a potential risk.

In December 2019, the London Self Improvement Board agreed that London Councils should commission qualitative research into boroughs' planned transformation savings. 31ten was commissioned to undertake this research with a group of four pilot councils selected in consultation between London Councils and 31ten.

The objectives of this research project were:

- To identify and gather evidence of the type and nature of savings plans that boroughs are defining as service transformation
- To explore and gather evidence of boroughs' approaches to transformation: their 'drivers', resourcing (delivery by service managers/transformation teams/external consultants) and anticipated savings
- To understand the challenges and risks in delivering transformation-led savings programmes.
- To identify and gather evidence of successful service transformation activity and understand the conditions that generate success
- To identify common themes and approaches across authorities and potential opportunities for shared learning and collaboration

### 2.2. APPROACH

There were four key elements to our approach:

1. Select and secure pilot councils
2. Analysis of data underpinning 'service transformation' savings
3. Structured interviews with key officers at pilot councils
4. Check and challenge of key themes

We outline each of these below.

### 1. Pilot councils

The decision on which authorities to use was a subjective judgement based on the following factors:

| Factor                                 | Description   | Source of assessment  |
|--|---|---|
| Size of service transformation savings | We were seeking a range of sizes of transformation savings in terms of both absolute savings and when compared to the Net Budget Requirement of the council   | Survey responses  |
| Transformation activity and maturity   | We were interested in authorities that were already some way into transformation projects to be able to gather the learning from their experiences.<br>We were also interested in the types of service transformation projects undertaken and how the transformation is managed – we were keen to have a spread of those with a strategic approach versus those with a more devolved set of loosely related projects. | London Councils and 31ten combined knowledge of authorities       |
| Type of borough                        | We involved a mix of boroughs covering inner and outer London, differing size and demographics, political control, and geographic spread.   | Public data   |
| Willingness to engage                  | We needed to ensure that the pilot councils were able to participate given other priorities (particularly the COVID-19 pandemic) and were genuinely willing to be open and honest in the process.   | Engagement with Finance Directors of the potential pilot councils |

Using these criteria, we identified a proposed shortlist of seven councils to approach and a backup longlist of a further five councils. We approached all shortlist councils and an additional one from the back up list, securing agreement to participate from four councils with a reasonable spread:

| Council     | Relative savings <sup>1</sup><br>L/M/H | Relative savings <sup>1</sup><br>% | Inner / Outer<br>London | Political<br>control | IMD<br>deprivation<br>(rank of avg.) |
|-------------|--|------------------------------------|-------------------------|----------------------|--------------------------------------|
| Camden      | H                                      | 11%                                | Inner                   | Lab                  | 132                                  |
| Haringey    | H                                      | 11%                                | Outer                   | Lab                  | 37                                   |
| Sutton      | M                                      | 6%                                 | Outer                   | Lib Dem              | 227                                  |
| Westminster | M                                      | 5%                                 | Inner                   | Cons                 | 134                                  |

Cumulatively the transformation savings planned by these four councils totals £75m over the four-year period 2019/20 to 2022/23, equating to approximately 15% of the London total.

## 2. Data analysis

We sought limited data from pilot councils to enable us to understand better what has been included in ‘service transformation’ savings. All pilot councils provided a spreadsheet breakdown of future savings supporting their MTFP, categorised by savings type per the London Councils return, and some also provided RAG monitoring reports of programme progress. It should be noted that pilot councils generally provided their latest 3-year figures and we have used these in this report. These figures don’t reconcile exactly with the London Councils MTFP January 2020 return figures which were based on earlier estimates and provided a 4-year cumulative figure.

It proved not possible to get historic savings (actuals) compared against historic projections in aggregate. The interviews elicited some sense of quantum of savings for specific projects but the data we obtained enabled us to undertake analysis on:

- Quantum of savings by service area.
- Types of projects making up the ‘service transformation’ saving total.

## 3. Interviews

The core of this piece of work was undertaking structured interviews with key officers involved in delivering service transformation projects and savings. We undertook 27 face-to-face interviews (over Microsoft Teams) across the four pilot councils covering a range of roles and functions. The actual officers/roles that we interviewed varied at each council but included:

- Chief executives

<sup>1</sup> Relative savings were calculated as cumulative savings for 2019/20 to 2022/23 (as reported in January 2020) compared against Net Budget Requirement for 2020/21

- Directors of finance and other finance leads
- Service leads covering adults and children's social care, economic development, planning and development, customer services
- Human resources / organisational development directors
- Strategy leads
- Programme managers
- Central transformation teams or programme monitoring roles - for example, PMO or similar.

#### **4. Check and challenge**

Following our data analysis and interviews, we summarised what we heard and learnt from each borough in a 'borough summary'. They were reviewed by key contacts from each borough and form the basis of the themes that are reported in this document. All data and findings in this report have been anonymised.

Following finalisation of the report, 31ten alongside the pilot boroughs, will hold dissemination workshops where other boroughs will be invited to discuss the report through a video call format. This will be carried out to facilitate cross borough learning and collaboration.

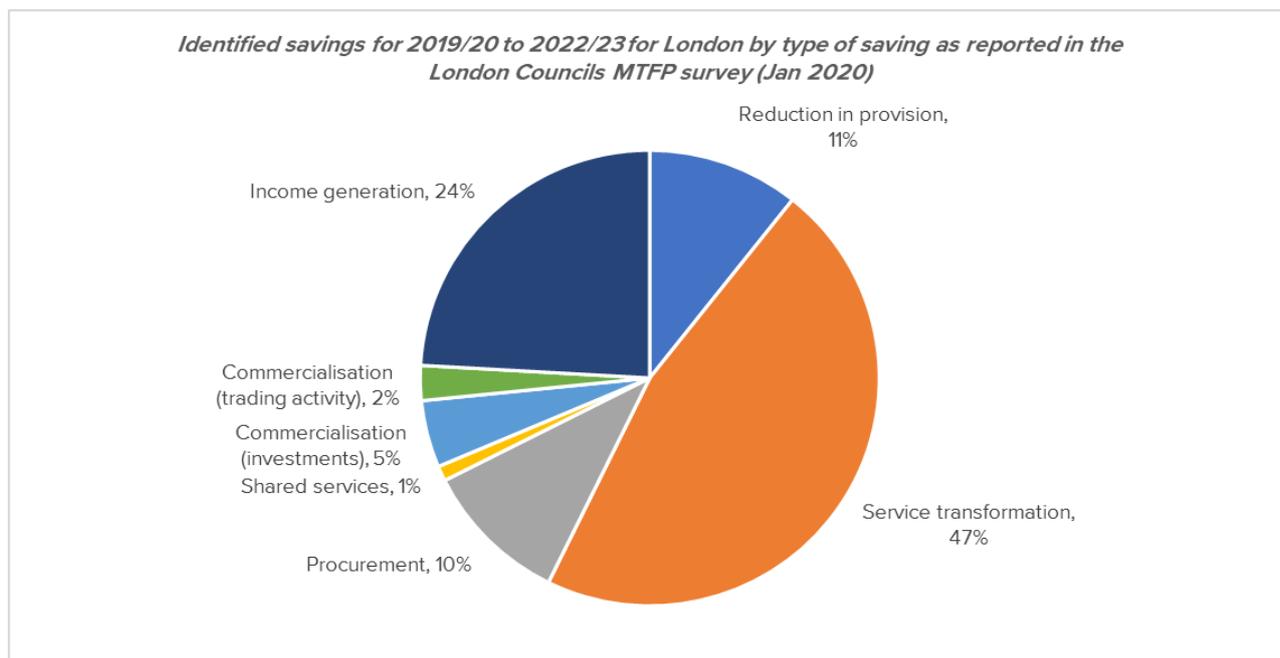
### 3. Transformation savings

This section sets out our findings on what the pilot councils have included in the service transformation savings category of their MTFP returns.

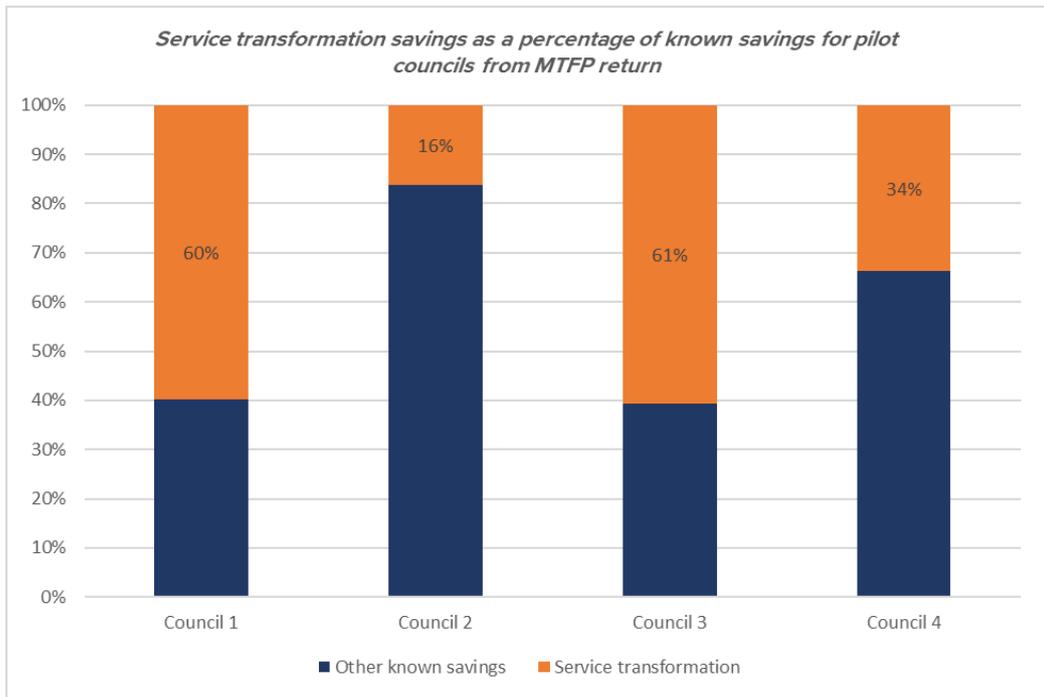
#### 3.1. SERVICE TRANSFORMATION SAVINGS

The London Councils MTFP survey identified that £1.9bn of savings are required to be achieved over the period 2019/20 to 2022/23 in London. Of this, approximately £1bn has been reported by councils as having plans in place to deliver, with the balance representing savings that as yet are ‘unknown’ ie councils do not yet know how these savings will be delivered but they are required for a balanced budget.

Councils have allocated the planned, or known, savings across a series of categories specified in the return. Of these known savings nearly 50% (approximately £500m across London for the four-year period) were reported as ‘service transformation’ savings. The breakdown across the categories are shown below.



For the pilot councils over the same period, the relative size of service transformation savings varied from 16% to 61% of total known savings as shown below.



Cumulatively service transformation savings totalled £75m across the four pilot councils, equating to 15% of the total known savings for London. For the remainder of this report, we refer to 3-year cumulative savings figures as this is how the pilot councils provided their detailed analysis. The equivalent 3-year total is £55m of service transformation savings for the four pilot councils.

From the data underpinning the MTFP returns, it became clear that one council has completed their latest return on a different basis to the other three by reporting cumulative savings each year.<sup>2</sup> This means that the savings figures in the MTFP for that council are overstated when comparing like for like with other councils. We have therefore adjusted all savings reported from this council in this report to be consistent with the others, giving the 3-year service transformation savings total under examination for the pilot councils as £40m. It should be noted that this does not materially affect the relative size of the sample as the adjusted pilot councils service transformation savings still account for 14% of the adjusted London equivalent savings.

Without data from London boroughs outside of the four pilot councils, it is not possible to quantify the full extent of this issue in the MTFP reports. However, from a quick review of the whole dataset, it is possible that a further four other councils may have reported in the same way.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>2</sup> For example, if a project was planning to achieve a recurring £1m saving the expectation from London Councils was that this would be reported as £1m in the year it was identified and £0 in future years. One council reported this as £1m in the first year, £2m in year 2 and £3m in year 3.

<sup>3</sup> We would expect the savings trend to go down the further away from the current year you get as councils plans are less robust in future years. Where the trend line goes up it would suggest that the council has reported on a cumulative savings basis. We have not explored this further, but an upwards trend was seen in returns from 4 other councils which may indicate an inconsistent reporting basis.

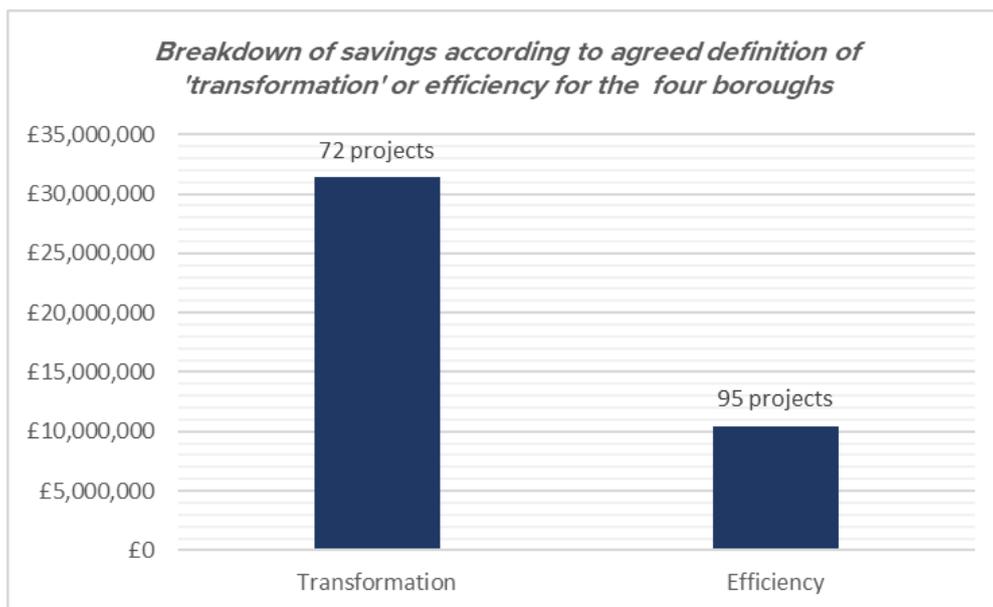
### 3.2. WHAT MAKES UP 'SERVICE TRANSFORMATION' SAVINGS?

It was clear from our discussion with pilot councils that 'service transformation saving' was not a phrase that most officers were familiar with. All four councils felt there is activity they would consider to be 'transformation' across almost all the MTFP categories (reduction in provision, service transformation, procurement, shared services, commercialisation (investments), commercialisation (trading activity), and income generation). Our interviewees delivered (or are delivering) projects that plan savings in a number of these other categories and we have included the learning from these in this report as there is no distinction or separation in how they are or were delivered. As a result, the category tends to contain projects that don't easily fit into the other MTFP survey headings.

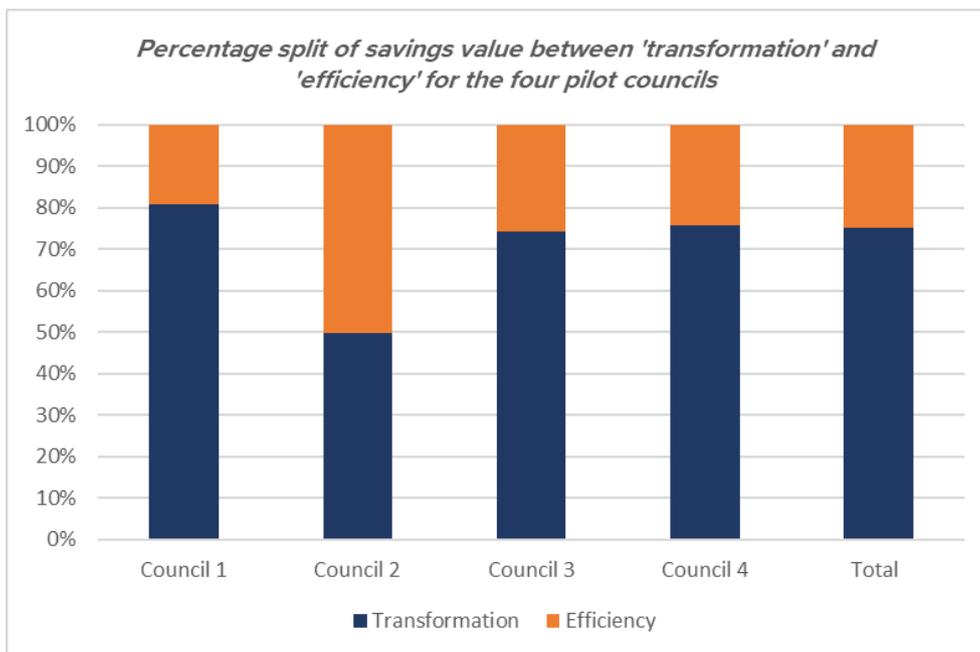
That said, on investigation of what pilot councils did report as 'service transformation' savings there appeared to be 2 main types of activity:

1. **Transformation activity/savings** – these generally involve a redesign of how services are delivered to improve outcomes and achieve savings. There will usually be a dedicated project, team, or some dedicated investment to deliver the transformation.
2. **Efficiency savings** – these are small changes to services or BAU to generate financial savings without changing outcomes; for example, small staff restructures, cost cutting, removing unfilled posts, capitalisation of costs etc. These changes are usually delivered within existing resources.

These definitions were discussed and agreed with boroughs and we have re-classified the 'service transformation' initiatives of the pilot councils into these two categories (and validated these with pilot councils) as shown in the chart below.



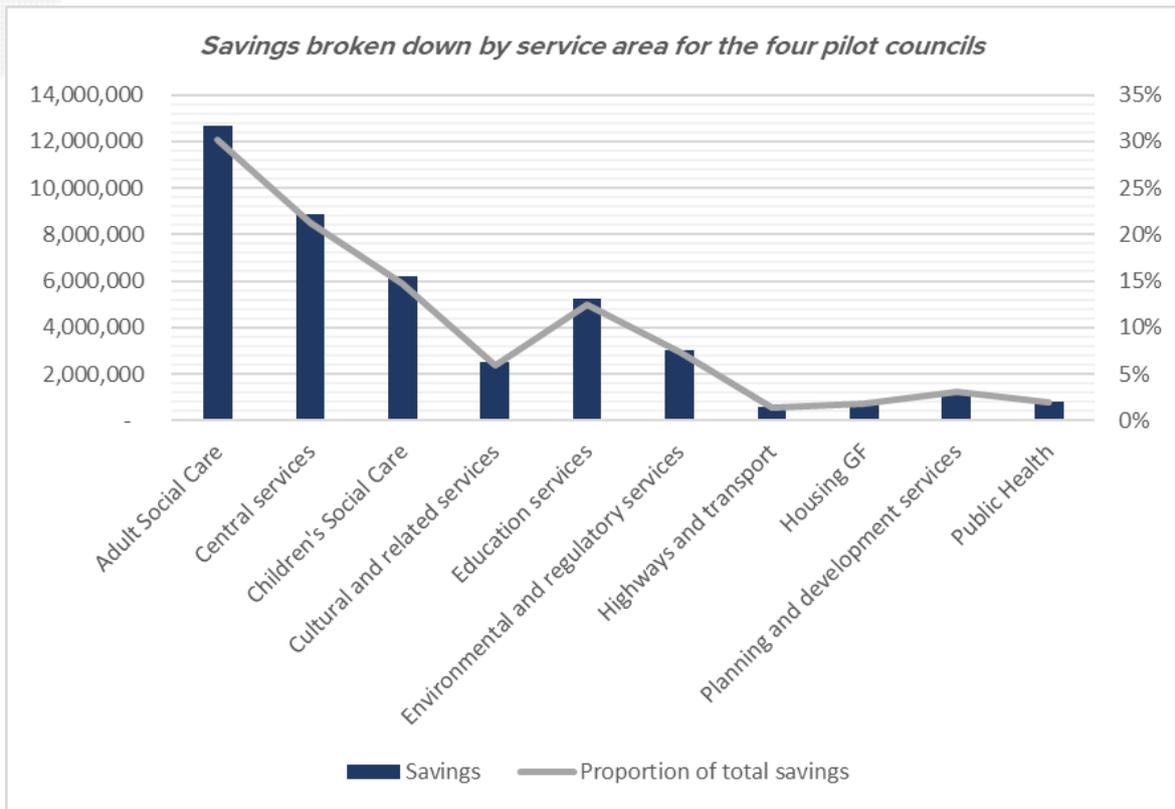
The majority of the value of savings (approximately £31m or 75%) related to transformation, but there was also a large number of smaller efficiency savings totalling almost £10m. These numbers only relate to the sample of pilot councils and whilst it is not possible to extrapolate these findings to the total service transformation savings for London (approximately £500m), it is relevant to note that there was a degree of consistency across 3 of the pilot councils with the value of transformation savings equating to between 70-80% of the value of savings as shown in the chart below.



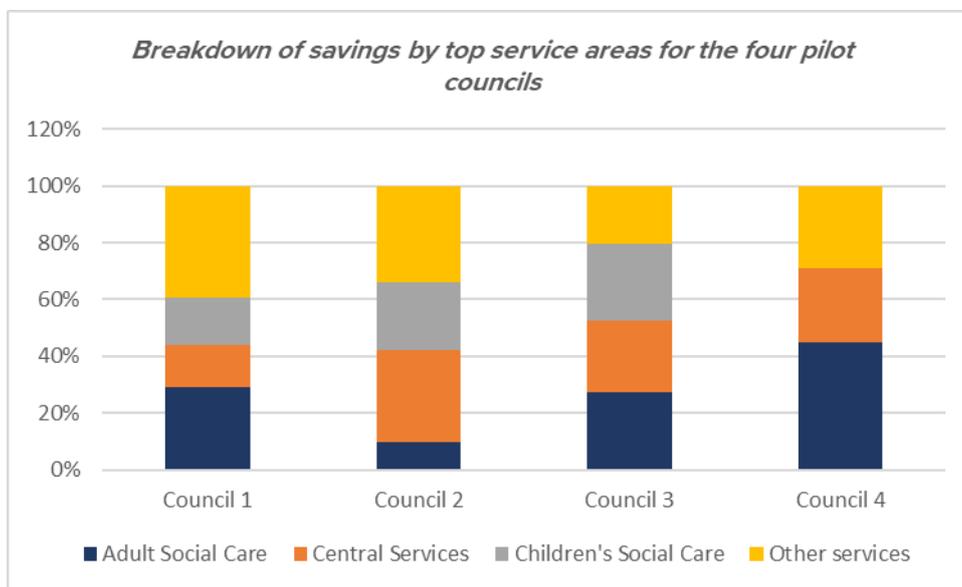
In general, for the pilot councils there were 5-6 transformation projects that account for approximately 60-70% of the planned financial savings in the 'service transformation' category with a long list of smaller initiatives.

Across pilot councils, there was reasonable consistency that the service areas with the highest planned savings are Adults Social Care, Central Service and Children's Social Care with savings across these accounting for 66% of all service transformation savings in the pilots. Central Services comprised predominantly customer transformation/digital projects as the largest single item in this category. There was also a noticeable value of libraries and neighbourhood savings across pilot councils<sup>4</sup>.

<sup>4</sup> Note £4.3m of the Education services total relates to one council's programme for their Learning Disability Partnership to be delivered in partnership with Children's Services.



Whilst the actual split between these top service areas varied across the pilot councils, it is noticeable that these 3 services comprise between 60-80% of total savings for all four pilot councils.



### 3.3. DRIVERS FOR TRANSFORMATION

From discussion with the pilot councils there were two main drivers for transformation: to achieve savings and/or to improve service outcomes. These are not mutually exclusive and all four pilot councils sought to achieve both but the primary drivers were subtly different.

Two councils described a history of reducing costs and making efficiencies to meet shrinking resources, resulting in a smaller staff base delivering the same services. This salami-slicing approach was not considered sustainable and they both described a need to transform the way services were delivered in order to continue to balance budgets.

One council described the early days of austerity as planting the seeds for the organisation to think about where it should prioritise investment. But it took a few years for this to evolve into a dialogue about how to deliver the council's desired outcomes within the available resources.

For the other council, the driver for transformation was less about making financial savings and more about improving the quality of outcomes and meeting customer expectations. That said the council has not been immune to austerity and officers described salami-slicing cuts that became unsustainable for some services and for others the transformation and innovation required to improve the service has also delivered significant savings (or increased income).

# 4. Transformation journeys

## 4.1. TRANSFORMATION JOURNEYS OF THE PILOT COUNCILS

Our discussions with pilot councils found that the transformation journey each of them had been on – previous efforts and initiatives to transform services and find efficiencies, and where each council found themselves now – was simultaneously unique (insofar as some of those past experiences were specifically shaped, informed and cultivated by each local context) whilst, at the same time, bearing a number of commonalities (the value placed on strong, clear leadership and the benefits of an agile, open approach).

### **The importance of organisational culture in successful transformation**

All four pilot councils we spoke to drew on the synergy between successful transformation and a strong, unifying cultural platform. The composition of this cultural basis differed from one council to the next:

- One council spoke of its strong cultural sense of collective responsibility to advance social justice and tackle inequalities, which served as a binding mechanism to bring together the organisation's people and its priorities
- Another referenced the sense of local community within the organisation, with a significant proportion of staff living either in the borough or neighbouring boroughs
- We heard about the key role that cross-council collaboration and collective learning can play in forging a new direction with regards to transformation
- Working culture was also highlighted as a fundamental basis upon which to propel transformation and change, with a culture that blends pastoral care and staff wellbeing alongside high, stretching expectations, as well as taking definitive action to increase workforce diversity and using this to drive and improve performance

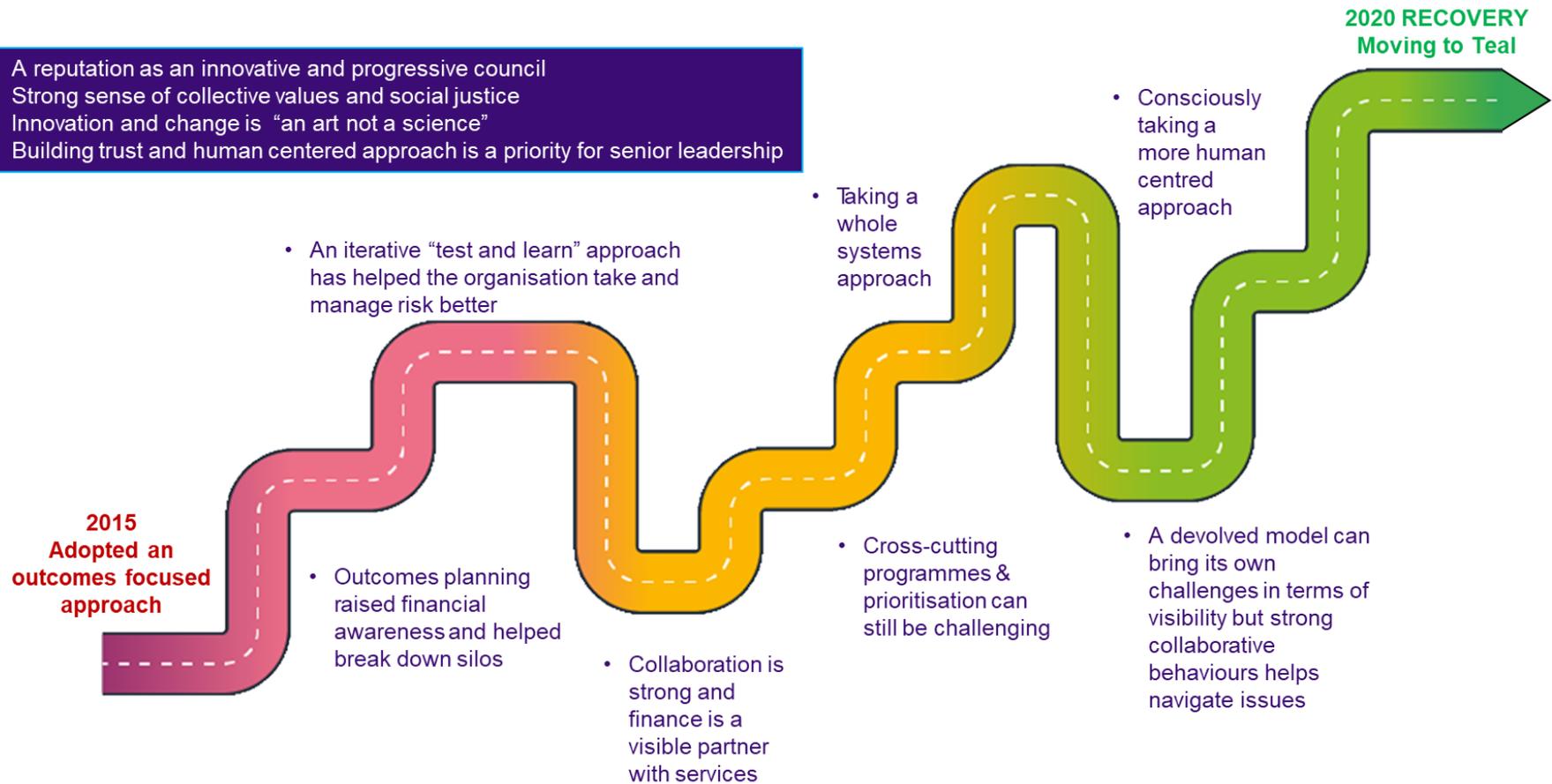
Though the feedback covered a wide range of focal points, some clear themes on the link between culture and transformation emerged – the importance of a common sense of purpose, a kinship to both the council and to the place, a truly collaborative culture that spans across the organisation, and championing workforce diversity as a means to improve and transform performance.

### **Each journey is unique – finding the approaches that work for your organisation is key**

The diagrams below are intended to give a sense of some of the key learning characteristics and approaches that have been tried, adapted, and evolved as the organisation learns and grows. These images are not intended to be exhaustive or in a strict chronological sequence but instead give an overall sense of the developmental journey of each of the pilot boroughs:

## Council A – Outcomes focus to ‘Teal’ organisation<sup>5</sup>

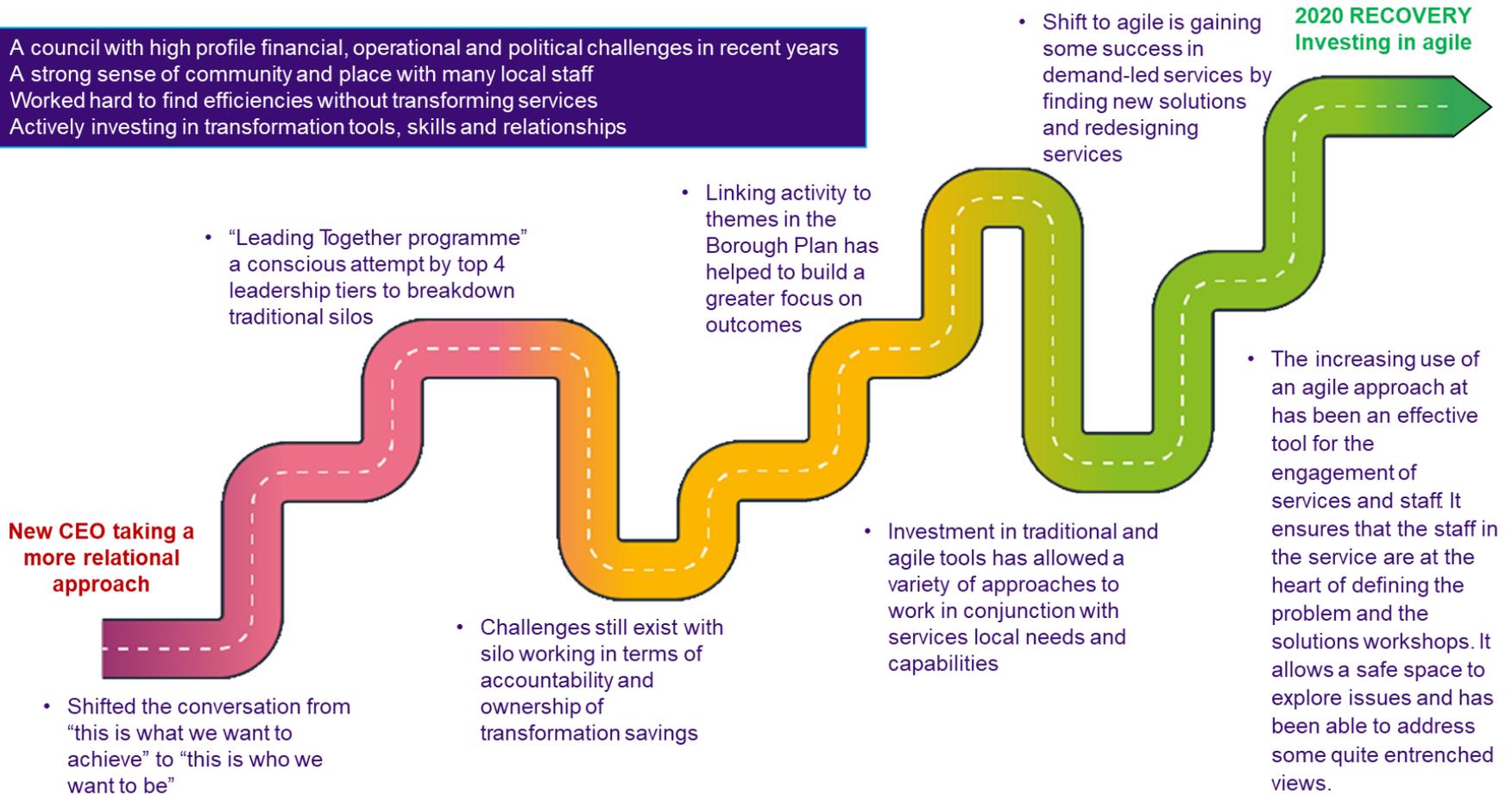
- A reputation as an innovative and progressive council
- Strong sense of collective values and social justice
- Innovation and change is “an art not a science”
- Building trust and human centered approach is a priority for senior leadership



<sup>5</sup> A ‘teal’ organisation is as defined by Frederick Laloux in ‘Reinventing organisations’ in 2014 in which he described organisations that operate largely without traditional hierarchies or management strategies. They are characterised by features like self-managed teams, intuitive reasoning and decentralised decision making. Employees are enabled to bring their full persona to work not just the professional persona and the organisation is considered to have its own evolutionary purpose which guides decision and actions rather than trying to predict or control the direction of the organisation.

## Council B – Taking a relational approach<sup>6</sup> to investing in Agile

- A council with high profile financial, operational and political challenges in recent years
- A strong sense of community and place with many local staff
- Worked hard to find efficiencies without transforming services
- Actively investing in transformation tools, skills and relationships

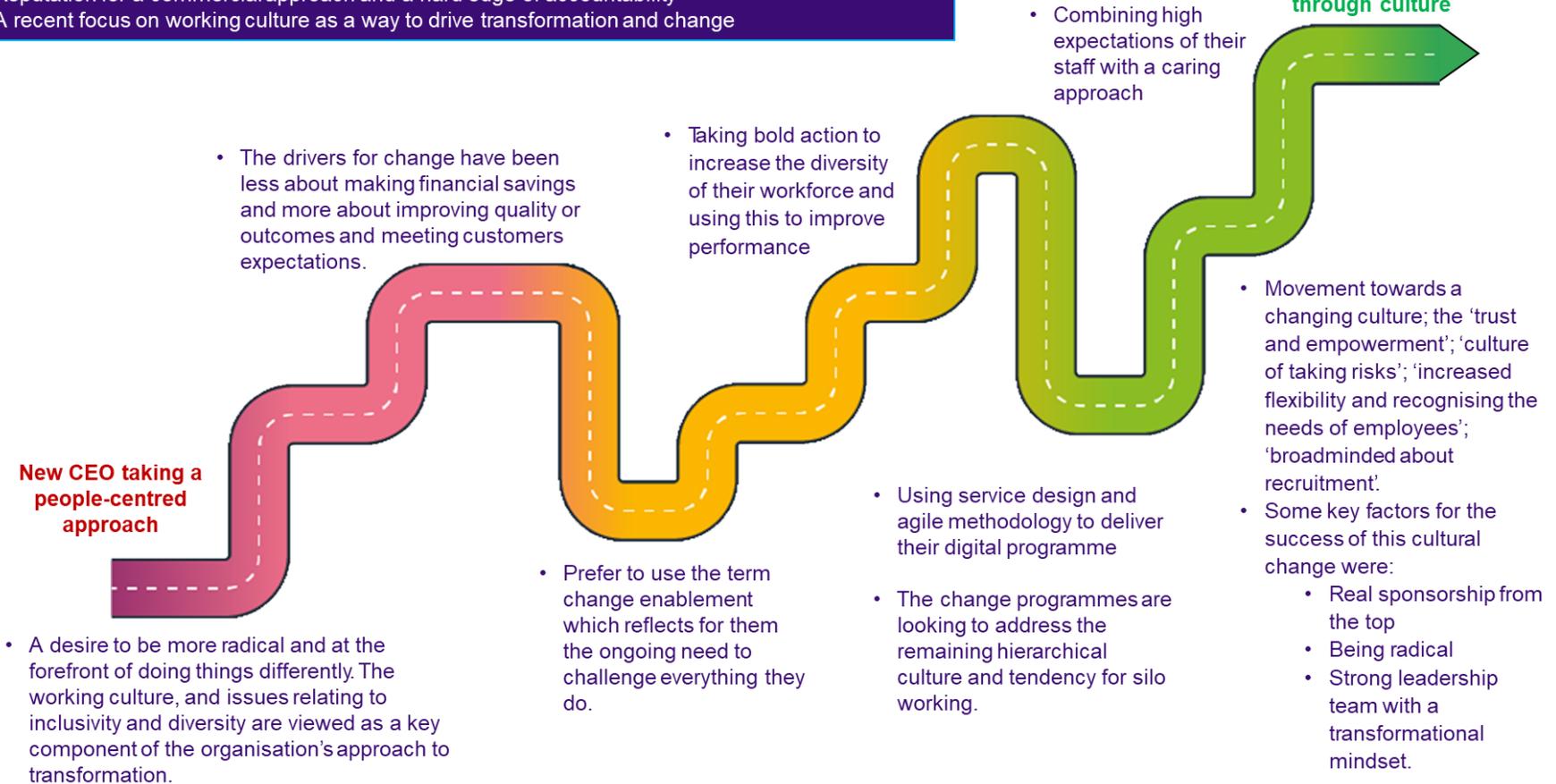


<sup>6</sup> Relational leadership involved being attuned to, and in touch with, the intricate web of relationships that influence an organisation. Irrespective of tasks, strategic plans, contracts etc relationship leadership is about people and their perceptions of how they are treated.

## Council C – A people-based approach to enabling change through culture

- They have a strong track record of delivering balanced budgets
- Their unique position means that the Council has traditionally had an ability to generate significant additional revenue to support the delivery of services.
- Reputation for a commercial approach and a hard edge of accountability
- A recent focus on working culture as a way to drive transformation and change

### 2020 RECOVERY Enabling change through culture



## Council D – Outcomes based commissioning approach to partnership and placed based focus

- A history of redesigning how services are delivered and have experimented with many different approaches over the years
- A variety of new delivery models, including wholly owned companies
- Local partnerships with the voluntary sector and other local public bodies
- A political landscape that emphasises bi-partisanship or cross party working.
- Well established shared local and regional services

A strong sense of organisational learning from progressing a variety of initiatives even if some of them did not always deliver the level of benefits initially planned

A patchwork of delivery mechanisms and partnerships have given them a range of different levers to pull in relation to the current financial challenges, a 'tool box' of options to deploy depending on the outcome they are intending to achieve.

- Strong collaborative senior leadership relationships consciously seek to manage the silo delivery

### 2020 RECOVERY Partnerships & place based focus

### 2018 embarked on an Outcomes based commissioning approach

- The move to outcomes based commissioning (OBC) had mixed results: losing momentum and becoming too theoretical, but significant impact on the Council's direction for transformation.

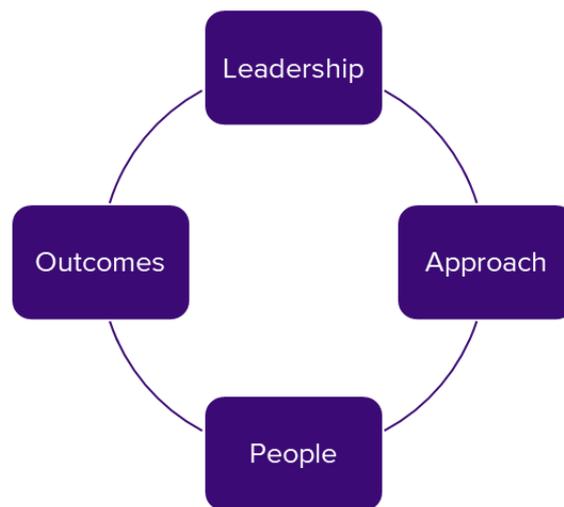
- OBC approach opened up new ways of thinking which had borne fruit from both a cross-Council collaborative working perspective as well as taken the Council in a new direction with regard to transformation and savings work.

- Strong culture of accountability and delivery but with a tendency towards silos. This can affect the delivery of some cross-cutting programmes where accountabilities are blurred and creativity to address cross-cutting themes is hindered.

- The council talks more about 'change' than transformation with the culture very much one of ownership and accountability around the delivery of savings.
- There is no standard approach to transformation. But they have a history of successful implementation most recently in Adult Social Care.

# 5. Lessons learned from successful transformation

Over the course of discussions with key personnel at the pilot councils on the topic of what lessons could be learned from successful (and indeed less successful) transformation initiatives, four clear themes emerged:



|   |  |
|---|--|
| <p><b>Leadership</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clear strategic vision with savings aligned</li> <li>• Visionary chief and engaged leaders</li> <li>• Sound governance and decision making</li> <li>• Organisationally self-aware – understanding what works locally</li> </ul> | <p><b>Approach</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Alignment of projects to vision</li> <li>• Structure for delivery aligned to culture</li> <li>• Able to incorporate latest technology and innovation as it develops</li> <li>• Test and scale approach</li> <li>• Appropriate gateways for financial approval</li> </ul> |
| <p><b>Outcomes</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Alignment of resources to outcomes for residents</li> <li>• Owned benefits but collective responsibility</li> <li>• Robust systems and processes for monitoring</li> <li>• Reflection and recognition of progress</li> </ul>      | <p><b>People</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Dedicated and empowered programme resource</li> <li>• Appropriate and sufficient skills (inhouse or bought in)</li> <li>• Ability and permission to flex approach as needed</li> <li>• Open culture where constructive challenge is welcomed</li> </ul>                    |

This section sets out more detail about the practical lessons and feedback that the pilot councils shared in relation to each of these themes.

## 5.1. LEADERSHIP – INCLUSIVE, STABLE AND VISIONARY

### **Stable leadership and clear accountability**

A clear theme of the discussions with the pilot councils was around the stability of leadership, both in the political and officer realm. This does not necessarily translate to the same personnel over long periods of time; indeed, all four pilot councils have had new Chief Executives in recent years. Rather, the stability required was a consistent strategic narrative, a unifying vision, and strong succession planning that creates an environment in which a change in leadership results in an evolution of the existing organisational direction.

All four pilot councils highlighted the importance of strong accountability in delivering transformation and any associated savings – particularly if there is a tension between central or corporate functions and services. There was no consensus or particular preference for where accountability should sit, provided that there is clarity with a clear steer that accountability for delivery of savings should align with budget responsibility. The most common factor in projects failing to deliver savings was where accountabilities were blurred and savings duplicated; most frequently in cross-cutting programmes.

#### **Examples**

One council noted a digital programme that invested centrally to deliver a recurring saving through channel shift savings. The savings were achieved in the services and contributed to those services delivering on budget, leaving the savings recorded against the central project as ‘undelivered’.

All four pilot councils found cross-cutting projects difficult to deliver because of the blurred accountabilities. Strategies that were perceived to have been more successful included:

- Using multi-disciplinary teams
- Being explicit about where delivery and benefits realisation responsibilities sit; one Directorate may be responsible for delivering a project, but another will achieve the savings
- A culture of collaboration was highlighted as the key to being able to resolve these difficulties
- A people-centred approach, with issues relating to inclusivity and diversity as a key component of the approach to transformation
- Making sure responsibility for leadership is widely dispersed across the top team.

### **Absorbing personnel changes through a widely understood vision**

Conversely, the disruption that frequent changes in leadership, whether political or executive, can cause was flagged as a source of frustration. Once again, the key theme that emerged here to withstand these

sorts of changes was the importance of developing and cultivating a consistent and widely understood organisational vision and culture.

**Example**

For one pilot council the clear sense of collective values coupled with a vision that underpins all the work of the Council has enabled the relatively new Chief Executive to evolve the approach to transformation from one of looking at the root cause of problems to a more human-centred approach focussing on networks and the power of relationships. But the direction of the council and the relationship between the council and its citizens remains consistent.

**Strong political relationships**

The importance of strong political leadership and strong relationships with elected members was also highlighted. Two councils spoke of the care taken to nurture good relations with the minority party, meaning that more radical transformational changes could be implemented whilst retaining broad cross-party support if these initiatives proved to be less successful than hoped – this allowed the space and backing for a more experimental approach and, most critically, learning from all initiatives.

**Example**

One pilot council spoke of the care taken to nurture good relationships with the minority political group, which meant that the council could make radical changes to services but also retained some degree of support if initiatives were to be unsuccessful. Officers described how this political ‘space’ afforded experimentation and critical learning on the back of certain less successful initiatives.

**Inclusive and broad leadership**

Another consistent theme was the crucial importance of inclusive, strong, and purposeful leadership across all levels of the organisation – the executive level through to service project level and beyond. For transformation to be successful, leadership must emanate from across these levels and it must endeavour to bring staff along on the journey. This can be achieved through involving staff from the outset (in identifying problems and issues) through to the design (developing and working up proposals and solutions) and implementation phases (acknowledging the professional motivation of staff to serve their communities). Coupled with this was feedback on the importance of clear, understandable messaging delivered in an open and collegiate way, allied to a consistent narrative over time and widespread communication of successes and achievements.

### **Example**

One of the pilot councils highlighted the centrality of diversity and inclusivity to the organisation's approach to transformation. The council's approach to cultural change pays particular attention to improving diversity in relation to gender and BAME staff, and concrete steps have been taken to address this - pay gaps in both these areas have been published and initiatives targeted at recruitment have been launched. Senior officers highlighted the impact that more diverse candidates had had on their services, with multiple examples given where different perspectives had led to significant improvements in performance or new ways of doing things.

## **5.2. OUTCOMES – SHIFTING MINDSETS AND REFRAMING PURPOSE**

### **Focusing on outcomes as a basis for change...**

One clear message from the two councils that used outcomes-based approaches to budgeting was the importance of this as a mechanism for change. An advantage of this was that change predicated on clearly understood goals and outcomes, such as those in council plans or strategies, was based upon a simple unifying vision, which provided unity of purpose and a foundation upon which to secure buy-in across the organisation.

### **...and to catalyse new thinking**

Another advantage of outcomes-based approaches, especially where these had not been widely used before, was the fresh thinking and opportunity to do things differently. One senior officer at a pilot council remarked that the precision was less important than the process, and that the process could take many forms (outcomes-based reviews, external resource providing new challenges and perspectives) provided it changed mindsets and ways of thinking .

### **Examples**

For one council the root and branch approach taken as part of the outcomes-based review, coupled with strong service leadership, enabled the council for remove ~20% of the cost base from Children's Services over 6 years.

Another council secured funding for a prototype project in an agile way. £50k was allocated to a pilot to have conversations with the public about how the council could meet their needs, with data on the impact on outcomes recorded for people participating in the pilot. The data recorded at this stage gave the council greater confidence to fund the next stage until after 12 months; indeed, there was

such a credible case for change that it was able to roll out the programme across the borough. This project is now informing the approach to the wider customer function.

### **Improving financial awareness more broadly**

Successful transformation was much more likely where financial awareness was at a high level across the organisation. It was also put forward that efforts to increase and develop this awareness should be council-wide and not solely rest on teams in finance and this was improved.

#### **Example**

For one pilot council the implementation of outcomes-based budgeting took a number of years. The first year focussed on policy: what makes the difference to outcomes? This exercise was not Directorate-based, and each outcome had a lead Director with responsibility to ‘canvass’ the organisation for ideas to deliver the outcome. It was only in the second year that the Council could address what it cost to deliver these outcomes and therefore where savings could be made savings.

Whilst the process didn’t initially generate the level of savings required this didn’t undermine the widely held view that it had lead the organisation to think collectively about its purpose and what it provides but also raised financial awareness across the organisation such that achieving a balanced budget became an organisation endeavour rather than a purely finance one.

### **An iterative approach to benefits realisation**

The pilot councils all spoke about the importance, and often difficult nature, of effective benefits tracking and realisation. There was no one way of achieving this – some tracked benefits centrally, others put responsibility onto service areas – but it was roundly viewed as a critical piece. Feedback from one council which has adopted an agile, iterative approach to transformation was that this allowed for a more reliable way of tracking and realising benefits, not least through minimising the prevalence of failed initiatives through the principle of “testing, scaling, or stopping”.

#### **Examples**

One pilot council felt that a more iterative approach to projects – testing, scaling, or stopping - means that big failures don’t materialise because they are stopped or adjusted before this can happen. This was described as ‘not nailing our colours to the mast so that means we can take more risks’. Another

council stated that the more agile approach to projects has made benefits realisation more reliable because:

- As part of the process, projects establish a clear baseline against which to monitor and sufficient detail to know how they will be delivered
- The approach secures collective ownership of the saving
- For one specific project, savings were released in a measured way whereby regular benefits realisation sessions were held with a formal sign-off process to confirm that the change was embedded and working well
- The test and scale approach enables savings to be written off at an early stage if it becomes clear that the approach is not working, which requires strong tracking analytics.

### 5.3. APPROACH – TEST AND LEARN BUILDS CONFIDENCE

#### **Strong collaboration and addressing silos**

All four pilot councils recognised the tendency towards silo working; a common problem across local government that can be reinforced by a culture of strong accountability. Addressing these through collaboration – which can often build up organically within organisations – was highlighted as a key driver of successful transformation. Alongside the earlier point on clear accountability, the importance of collaboration was pinpointed as a facilitative mechanism to achieving cross-cutting, council-wide transformation and in generating consensus and buy-in.

#### **Examples**

Pilot councils have sought to address silo working by:

- Using the longstanding relationships across directorates to foster greater collective ownership around a simple narrative, vision or set of priorities
- Investing in the top team with leadership development programmes to improve collaborative working and to develop a culture of trust, openness and honesty
- Restructuring to break down particularly negative silos
- Creating a culture of innovation that encourages cross-working teams
- Creating opportunities for staff to learn about people in other areas of the council
- Using an outcomes-based approach to budget setting and allocating senior leadership responsibility for outcomes; thereby encouraging work across traditional directorate silos.

## **Adopting your own version of agility and flexibility**

The pilot councils all had subtly different interpretations of an agile approach – this is common, as different organisations adopt approaches in their own ways to fit their own circumstances – but what came through consistently was a focus on agility (moving at pace, scaling and sizing up), flexibility (testing and trialling, learning from failures) and creating an environment in which staff feel empowered to take measured risks without fear of reprisal. Feedback was that – though by no means a panacea – this sort of approach can be effective in generating buy-in and reducing and overcoming barriers to transformative change, and there was a view that some of the changed ways of working enforced by the Covid-19 pandemic are likely to become permanent features

### **Examples**

Some of the ways in which the pilot councils have embraced agility and flexibility include:

- Relaxation of governance processes in favour of a greater emphasis on flexibility, risk management and collaboration
- A holistic approach to transformation that looks at the whole system, including partners, to explore what they need to do and focuses on a more agile and iterative approach
- The increasing use of an agile approach serving as an effective tool for the engagement of services and staff, by ensuring that staff in the service are at the heart of defining the problem and the solutions
- The use of more informal programme board meetings using ‘huddles’ of the relevant people around a wall mounted road map focussing on blockages and challenges
- The pandemic providing a cultural ‘boost’ to more agile working, faster decision making, streamlined processes, removing a layer of hierarchy, and a greater focus on staff wellbeing.

## **Adopting a range of approaches helps to iterate**

However, the councils were all experienced enough to state that one method or approach alone is never sufficient – instead, a toolkit of approaches is required depending on the project, initiative, services involved or other key transformational factors. Flexibility in adopting, testing, and trialling new technologies or other innovations was also flagged as an important factor in remaining prepared and agile. Sufficient breadth within the toolkit of approaches allows councils to successfully iterate the ways in which they can transform delivery and achieve savings in different contextual circumstances.

## Examples

Each pilot council fed back on this point:

- One council stated that there is no standard approach to transformation or change; some projects run along traditional project management lines and others in a more agile way depending on the nature of the change
- One echoed this, saying that their approach to transformation is deliberately undefined; again, some projects are delivered using a more traditional project management and others using agile principles
- Another council uses a business case approach to justify investments in savings approaches with an emphasis on a reliable evidence base; that said, they are increasingly seeking to make this a fairly light-touch process if officers believe it is the right thing to do
- The fourth council also has no standard approach to transformation, but cited a successful programme in Adult Social Care that was driven by strong, clear leadership, good engagement, good relationships, member commitment, and clear accountability alongside a plan for achieving savings

## 5.4. PEOPLE – IT'S ALL ABOUT RELATIONSHIPS

### Supporting transformation from the centre...

Some of the councils had a centralised team where others devolved more responsibility to services.

Where central teams did exist, they tended to operate:

- As a PMO function
- In a transformation delivery role for projects/programmes
- In a transformation support role (governance, resources, training, HR etc)
- To provide strategy, policy, and insights – undertaking analysis, intellectual thinking, support with report writing

There was a view that this sort of wraparound support for transformation activity can be instrumental in improving the success of transformation, by providing much-needed resource to cajole, maintain momentum and drive change alongside services. However, even those councils with centralised teams acknowledged that services play a fundamental and crucial role in successful transformation. As a result, a decision to set up a central function should never be viewed as a panacea or shortcut to successful transformation, but rather as an enabler for growing and developing effective cross-council transformative change.

## Examples

The approaches to central support varied across the pilot councils with no one solution being considered better:

- One council has a central Strategy & Change team with a lead for each Executive Director and responsibility for strategy, policy and insights and a corporate PMO (within Finance) with programme oversight. Delivery responsibility sits within the Services
- One council has a central PMO function with responsibility for oversight, challenge, and reporting but transformation is very much Directorate-led with project managers from within the Service
- One council has a centralised change team that performs a PMO role, transformation support (help with governance, resources, training) and delivery role for some projects. The team provides 'wrap-around' support that has been seen as instrumental in improving the success of transformation. Like the other pilot councils, responsibility and accountability for delivery sits with the Services
- One council has no central transformation or change resource; Services are responsible for delivering their own programme, some with their own change teams, and this is perceived to have been working well. More recently this council established a Corporate PMO to provide a monitoring and assurance role and a remit for delivering one of the council's strategies.

### **...but transformation is everybody's business**

The relationship between services and the centre – whether a specific centralised team or, in a wider sense, the executive (including finance) – was unanimously viewed as critical. Developing productive and collaborative relationships was key – one example was to have specific elements of a central team dedicated to specific service areas (akin to a business partnering model), thereby giving those staff the chance to develop detailed knowledge of that area and provide stability to grow better relationships. Indeed, in some cases, there have been transfers and secondments of staff from services into central teams (and vice versa). Another council echoed this, citing strong relationships with services to the extent of services funding discrete posts within the central team.

One council felt it was important that project management was embedded within teams, to ensure that the transformation was properly owned by the service. Another echoed this with a strong view that not only did projects require service-led ownership, but that the benefits realisation process could also be strengthened by being conducted with support and involvement at a service level rather than solely through finance.

Another council, with no central transformation resource, said that services are given direct responsibility for leading transformation. Some have set up their own change teams and it was noted by one service that this investment gives them the time to approach transformation in a measured way rather than making rash decisions that can have unintended consequences.

#### **Example**

One council launched a cross-cutting customer service and digital programme and invested a lot of time getting buy-in from services. It is using a service user design approach using agile principles. It uses multi-disciplinary teams, but services lead the project for their area. Savings are based on evidence and are aligned to where the budget sits; this means that the project does not recognise the back office savings associated with the project, though still facilitates the delivery of these through a service design team.

#### **...and it should be supported by an investment in staff**

Three of the four councils emphasised the importance of underpinning transformation with investment in their staff including development programmes, flexible working (prior to COVID-19), defined professional working practices, cultural change, a tangible focus on diversity and inclusion, investing in pay. This was seen as critical to the transformation of the organisation as well as services and two of the councils had comprehensive OD programmes running alongside their savings programme.

But at a project level, the need to engage staff in the transformation was highlighted by all four pilot councils.

#### **Example project: Highways**

In one council, the Highways service undertook a root and branch workflow analysis of the function. This was used to engage staff in the process of problem identification and service re-design. But alongside this, the service made an investment in the remaining staff with a Development Programme including 360 reviews, coaching and nominations for the Emerging Leaders and Developing Leaders Programmes.

The key factors for success were identified as:

- Keeping the staff engaged: taking them on a journey; and committing to their development
- Using innovation to enthuse staff with drive and energy
- Building a team to support delivery
- Creating a culture of permission; 'it's ok to try things - they may not work and that's ok'.

As a result of the programme, the service was able to reduce staff headcount by 15%, removing £750k from a £6m cost base.

### **Using external support when it is needed**

The majority of the councils we spoke to had used external resources to support transformation activity at some stage, whether as supplementary resource or, in some instances, to bridge a resourcing gap. Another advantage of tapping into external expertise was the provision of evidence of benchmarking or experience of what works elsewhere. One comment was around the use of consultants to support projects in the early stages of project formation, where additional capacity can provide an injection of pace as well as effective challenge and clarity on direction and a fresh perspective to develop solutions to problems. Another key point was around ensuring external resources are deployed in the right way to avoid a feeling of change being 'done' to the organisation rather than being owned and driven from within.

#### **Examples**

- One council uses third parties to support their programmes but there was a sense that they need to be used in the right way to avoid a feeling of change being done to the organisation rather than being owned
- One council has used consultants to support projects, particularly in the early stages of project formation, with the view that consultants can bring additional capacity as well as effective challenge and clarity on direction
- One council uses external resources where it is needed, particularly to give additional capacity as well as experts who can provide evidence of benchmarking or experience of what works elsewhere.

## 6. Benefits realisation

This section sets out specific learning for both finance staff and staff in other services around the realisation of savings.

### 6.1. QUANTIFYING BENEFITS

The finance interviewees made a range of points about the quantification of benefits which affected the ability of the council to realise savings. In particular, the importance of buy-in from the service area to the savings target was emphasised; a number of interviewees mentioned savings targets where there was a lack of understanding of the basis or evidence for the saving and, as a result, there was no buy-in or ownership from the those that were required to deliver the initiative.

Similarly, the need to have a sound evidence base for the quantification of benefits was considered important. Projects with a clearly established baseline that were able to test approaches provided much more reliable estimates than those that were high level estimates or finance-imposed targets. Finance colleagues interviewed were generally clear which benefits were secure and those that were less so, and this was reflected in the RAG ratings used in monitoring reports. Interviewees consistently expressed their role in challenging the quantification and realisation of benefits, particularly if they seemed excessively large or 'too good to be true'.

Related to this was an acceptance from several interviewees that they have, at times, been overly optimistic with respect to the timing of the delivery of savings. It was noted that councils have on occasion underestimated the amount of change required to deliver a saving or that the assumptions underpinning the speed of realising savings were unrealistic, leading to a slower than planned realisation of benefits.

#### **Example**

One council was looking to increase commercial income from their property portfolio but they found that they were unable to increase rents without fixing some of the structural issues around the way the valuers and surveyors team worked, so the additional income took longer to realise than anticipated.

Another council sited an IT/digital project in which the focus was on getting the system in place in the belief that this would fix the problems whilst failing to address the redesign of services that it can enable (and where the savings would have been achieved).

## 6.2. DELIVERY MECHANISM

Interviewees identified that a key factor in the successful realisation of benefits was having a delivery mechanism behind the savings encompassing:

- Clear accountability for the delivery of benefits
- A detailed plan with actions and owners to achieve the savings
- Resources to deliver the transformation

### Example

One council had a vision to develop some of their assets to create community hubs with voluntary groups in some and secure commercial income from the remaining property. But the vision didn't translate into a clear programme with clarity on where the income target would come from. So the Council was unable to secure the projected commercial rent without a larger investment.

Another council noted that historically savings in Adult Social Care had been high level markers where it was felt that something should be able to be done but there was no clear plan to deliver the savings. This has now changed, and the current targets are supported by a clear programme of work.

It was noted that a more agile or iterative approach to project delivery has been an effective way to avoid big project failures as the approach and benefits are constantly updated; projects can be and have been stopped early and benefits removed or reprofiled if evidence began to emerge which led them to appear unrealistic or unachievable. However, participants also noted that the agile approach presented some difficulties around governance, particularly in navigating projects through the conventional business case process. If the target savings were unknown at the outset, there could sometimes be challenges in releasing investments and agreeing to growth required to deliver the savings.

### Examples

Each council approached business cases differently but several noted that the culture around this is changing:

- Lighter touch approach, including streamlining governance
- Greater emphasis on flexibility, risk management and collaboration
- Releasing tranches of funding to test or prototype approaches

Indeed, one council fed back that there was a view that the lighter touch approach was one of the factors influencing recent successful transformation programmes in Adults and Children's, and that this could not have been achieved if a detailed business case had been required.

### 6.3. RELEASING STAFF

Realising FTE savings was identified as one of the more challenging areas. Councils and projects that had been successful highlighted that this needs to be done in a measured way, with staff not released until the service has proven that the posts were no longer needed. In some of the pilot councils, even if a programme had been funded through central investment, savings were able to be 'cashed' against departmental targets which helped to release benefits relating to headcount.

#### **Example**

One council felt that a more agile approach to projects made benefits realisation more reliable for a number of reasons:

- As part of the process, the projects have established a clear baseline against which to monitor and sufficient detail to know how it is going to be delivered
- The approach secures collective ownership of the saving
- The test and scale approach enables savings to be written-off at an early stage if it is clear that the approach won't work.

But the importance of data analytics was noted in order to track the impact of the projects.

### 6.4. RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN FINANCE AND SERVICES

The relationship between finance and service areas was identified as crucial to successful benefits realisation. Relationships that were based on honesty, flexibility, and partnership - rather than an adversarial 'guardians of the public purse' approach - were the most effective. Indeed, those that were able to elevate the MTFP to an organisational endeavour, rather than solely the preserve of finance, secured the strongest buy-in and most fruitful relationships.

All four councils emphasised the need for Services to own their savings targets with two of the council finance functions making the decision not to set savings targets centrally but to allow services to identify their own. But there was a unanimous view of interviewees across all four councils about the strong

sense of accountability felt within services to deliver on budget. Indeed, services were clear that if their transformation programme failed to deliver the anticipated savings they would be expected to find the savings elsewhere.

## 6.5. PROJECT EXAMPLES

### **Example project: Adult Social Care**

One council was able to reverse a history of overspending in ASC over a 4-5 year period, despite considerable growth in the service demand, with a transformation programme. The approach started with a piece of consultancy work to consult with staff and stakeholders on how to improve outcomes now and in the future and benchmarking service performance. This gave a clear direction of travel and a collective ownership which enabled them to create a programme with 3 strands, supported by a set of underpinning actions to deliver. The key factors that were considered to contribute to the success of this project were:

- Strong leadership of the programme: being available to staff; creating a task management culture; clear communication about what the programme is trying to achieve; and leading by example
- Clear ownership by the service with constructive challenge by CMT
- Good engagement of the workforce – the programme took their ideas about delivering better outcomes; provided consistent and honest messaging around the need to make savings but the driver being supporting communities better
- Good relationships with CCG strategic partners
- Member commitment and buy-in
- A savings plan that aligned to the project with clear accountability for delivery
- Close working relationship with Finance as a business partner with regular liaison as well as the S151 officer on the Programme Board.

### **Example project: Children's Services**

At one council the Children's Service realised that salami-slicing budgets was no longer sustainable and they needed to find a new way to deliver services. They have developed a programme of work based on a simple approach:

1. Data analysis – look at outcomes and financial benchmarks
2. Best practice – look at what others are doing and what works elsewhere

3. Bottom up review – look at their own services in a bottom up way; map the service including the role of partner organisations; look for duplication; look for graduated service offers.

It is early in the programme, but they have managed to reduce spending on the 16-24 pathway and increased revenue for SEND services. The key factors in success were identified as:

- Working in partnership with other service providers
- Starting from the point of what the service wants to deliver rather than cutting costs
- Listening to staff and using them to design the solutions.

# 7. Forward look

This section sets out the forward look with respect to transformation savings, particularly the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on the pilot councils' planned savings.

## 7.1. PRE-COVID-19 STATUS OF MTFP SAVINGS

All four pilot councils believed that they were broadly on track to deliver their MTFP savings prior to the pandemic; some had small budget deficits but they were confident that they could have been filled by the end of the financial year.

It should be noted that none of the pilot councils record centrally the savings achieved by individual projects; services are held accountable for project savings through their bottom-line budget and if one project failed to realise the anticipated savings, the service would be expected to make up the difference elsewhere. One of the pilot councils is in the process of implementing a system of central monitoring, but it is not yet in place.

## 7.2. IMPACT OF COVID-19 ON TRANSFORMATION PROGRAMMES

As with all local authorities, the pilot councils have all been negatively affected financially by the pandemic to varying degrees: commercial income has been severely hit, affecting councils to varying degrees depending on their reliance on this; some impact on social care spending has been observed, though not severe; and delays to transformation savings have been necessitated as staff have been diverted to other priorities, often in response to the pandemic.

But there was also a strong positive narrative from all interviewees on the impact of the pandemic on their organisations and how they work, in particular:

- It has driven positive cultural change by forcing councils to be more agile, make quicker decisions and flatten hierarchies, whilst also enhancing the focus on staff wellbeing
- It has changed the nature of the interaction between councils and their communities (residents, businesses, and other groups); specifically, it has accelerated the move online where expedient but also re-defined service offers where a blended approach (mixing online and face-to-face) may be required
- It has redefined the relationship between councils and partners in the community and voluntary sector, enabling a better use of community space

- It has, albeit an enforced necessity at the outset of the lockdown, facilitated effective working from home that has been well-received and shows signs of greater longevity as a workforce model, with the pilot councils working through any potential impacts on buildings and real estate that may emanate from this in the future.

### 7.3. FUTURE DIRECTION OF TRANSFORMATION

Despite the unprecedented nature of the current situation, the four pilot councils took a steady view of the future. Broadly, each council intended to continue with the same transformation programme they had in place pre-pandemic over the short-term. They were composed of 'the right things to do' and feedback was that the commitment to pursuing these outcomes as part of the transformational journey remained undimmed.

What had changed, however, was the anchoring context around those goals and the impact of the pandemic on that context. There was an acknowledgement that a focus on, for instance, economic recovery – interpreted in a broad sense spanning both financial inclusion for the most vulnerable and the fortunes of employers, businesses and traders within local economies – was going to become increasingly central to the future direction of local transformation. Alongside this, there was an acceptance that the timescales for some transformation initiatives that were previously underway were likely to be impacted, with the general view one of a 6-12-month delay.