

**CABINET**

**COUNCILLOR DAVID CLIFFORD,  
LEADER OF THE COUNCIL**

**29 May 2018**

**KEY DECISION: YES**

**REPORT NO. CEX1801**

## **RUSHMOOR 2020 - MODERNISATION AND IMPROVEMENT PROGRAMME**

### **SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS:**

This report seeks approval for the establishment of the Rushmoor 2020 programme as the Council's approach to modernisation and improvement for the next 2 years. The ambition for the programme is to modernise and improve how the Council works to increase customer focus, deliver sustainable savings, provide excellent services and drive forward the Council's ambitious regeneration programme.

Recommended that:

- (i) the Modernisation and Improvement Programme 'Rushmoor 2020' based on the outline programme plan set out in Appendix 3 be agreed
- (ii) the proposed member engagement and governance arrangements for the programme at section 3.2 be agreed
- (iii) Cabinet note the resourcing arrangements in section 4 and consider the related recommendations set out in report CEX1802 later on the agenda for this meeting.
- (iv) Cabinet approve the use of the Service Improvement Fund to support the Programme.

## **1. INTRODUCTION**

- 1.1 This report lays out the Council's approach to modernisation and improvement for the next 2 years. The Council Plan for 2018/19 states that the Council should "Listen, Learn and Deliver Better" and become more customer-focussed. For the Council to achieve financial sustainability and deliver excellent services whilst regenerating the area for the long term, it will be necessary to change the way the Council works and delivers services. This report explains the rationale for establishing a new programme, Rushmoor 2020, to provide the focus for and ensure delivery of this change.

## **2. BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT**

- 2.1 Over the past 12 months the Council has been through a period of transition working with a new Chief Executive following the retirement of the previous post holder who was very well respected and had carried out the role for many years. The political leadership also changed the year prior.

- 2.2 Since his appointment, the Chief Executive has taken time to understand the Council, how it operates and its culture, whilst getting to know officers and Members. It has been acknowledged, by officers and members, that existing ways of working and the Council's approach to change and transformation approaches have been in place for some time and are now less effective. Whilst the 8-Point Plan has worked well, the context for local government has changed and it is felt the Council's approach needs to be reviewed to reflect new priorities, current thinking across the sector and continuing financial pressures.
- 2.3 Taking this as a starting point, the Chief Executive explored the Council's strengths and identified those areas where improvements might be necessary and input was sought from officers, Members and local partners. To inform this review further, the following pieces of work were commissioned / undertaken that have all helped in establishing the current position and suggest areas that the Council can build on to help it move forward.
- LGA Peer Challenge
  - Staff Survey
  - High Level Customer Diagnostic and Customer Experience Project

The key findings and recommendations from these pieces of work are described below.

### **LGA Peer Challenge**

- 2.4 The peer challenge was undertaken during the first week of December. The peer team spoke to over 70 people including Members, officers and external partners. The peer team spent three days on site with the culmination being a presentation of the findings.
- 2.5 The full feedback report can be accessed on line at <https://www.rushmoor.gov.uk/peerchallenge>. In overall terms, the findings from the peer challenge were positive and the Council praised in a number of areas. The challenge itself looked at a number of components namely:
- Understanding of the local place and priority setting
  - Leadership of Place
  - Financial planning and viability
  - Organisational leadership and governance
  - Capacity to deliver

- 2.6 The report states

“... there is a recognition by the Council's leadership that it faces greater challenges in future – both financial and in terms of service delivery – and the organisation will need to change. The Council should become more agile and flexible; able to quickly seize new opportunities, driven by performance and the desire to make the most efficient use of resources. The appointment of a new chief executive in May 2017 completes a new political and managerial

leadership team, which gives the opportunity to open a new chapter. That leadership has already shown an openness to change and a willingness to engage with partners locally and across the sector. This is summarised in the phrase 'Listen, learn and deliver better' which sits at the heart of the Council Plan 2017/18."

2.7 The report has been welcomed by officers and members and includes a number of key recommendations that the Council wants to take forward. In summary, the key areas are:

- Create a clearer narrative of the Council's long term vision for the area and extend the Council's planning horizon to support delivery of that vision, enabling it to build on the economic success of the area
- Clearer and fewer priorities and being able to redirect resources to them
- More emphasis on the underlying budget challenge and more regular monitoring and vigorous challenge to significant areas
- Strengthen capacity in the areas of regeneration and transformation/modernisation and develop a broader programme to help embed and increase the pace of change
- Improve the approach to scrutiny
- Understand residents views better to inform the development and review of the Borough's vision and service transformation
- Improve performance management and governance
- Reshaping the approach and collective resources of the Rushmoor Strategic Partnership members to focus on fewer, more strategic issues
- Aligning and integrating property and regeneration strategy and priorities better

A shorter review visit will be arranged in around 18 months' time to sense check how the Council is making progress against the agreed improvements.

### **Staff Survey**

2.8 It is important to understand the views of staff and how they feel so that they can contribute to the Council going forward. The previous staff survey was carried out a number of years ago and was considered no longer current or useful in terms of providing a benchmark so a new survey was undertaken during November. Informal discussion sessions were held by Chief Executive with a cross slice of staff and broader briefing sessions held in the autumn for all staff. These all contributed to the new Chief Executive working to understand the Council and its culture better.

2.9 The survey was commissioned with the help of South East Employers with the results published and distributed to staff. The results were positive in many areas with employees agreeing that Rushmoor Borough Council is a good place to work and with most people feeling happy in what they do.

2.10 There were however, a number of areas identified for improvement. These mainly focussed on:

- Need for clearer vision and better leadership and direction from management
- Need to work more as a 'team' across services
- Improved communication and understanding of the key messages
- Better change management and planning
- Development opportunities for everyone and increased investment in people
- Better management particularly in managing poor performance

### **Customer Diagnostic and Customer Experience Project (Phase 1)**

2.11 Since the adoption of the “Listen, Learn, Deliver Better” ethos in 2016, the Council has not changed fundamentally how it provides services. In order to truly become a customer focussed organisation further work is required that looks to challenge the status quo and look at service delivery from the perspective of our customers. Iese, a local authority owned social enterprise who have undertaken similar work in other councils, was commissioned to carry out an initial diagnostic of where the Council is currently in terms of becoming a customer centric organisation.

2.12 The initial diagnostic report contained a number of key messages including:

- Some excellent exemplar services such as Revenues and Benefits
- However, the lessons from exemplar services have not been rolled out as a corporate approach
- The customer service function is seen as an “add on” by services and not as an integral part of the service to the customer
- The current approach doesn't encourage problem solving or end to end solutions
- Processes could be improved providing a much better service to the customer and significant savings could be achieved at the same time.

2.13 To substantiate the initial work a second, more detailed piece of work was then commissioned and undertaken with a joint council and Iese project team. The Customer Experience project (Phase 1) looked in more depth at the high volume systems and process that the Council is engaged in particularly in those areas with high levels of customer contact. The main findings from the project confirmed that there is substantial opportunity to redesign services against demand and remove waste built into our current processes. A high-level digital overview suggested that if we want to deliver on the Council's digital strategy, we will also need to think differently about digital and update the technology we use to support our business and enable our customers to help themselves more. The team from Iese also considered how well placed the Council was to achieve the outcomes set out in the 'target operating model' shared by the Chief Executive in the Autumn (Appendix 1) and the supporting Behaviours Framework (Appendix 2). The Iese team identified that there would need to be some shifts in culture and development of expertise in some areas for that model to become full reality. They also suggested that we were not making the most of some of our employees and we should aim to

unlock more of the talent we have in the organisation and empower our staff to do better things for our customers.

- 2.14 This will be a substantial work programme to take forward but the potential scale of the improvement opportunity and consequential ability to contribute towards the Council's savings requirement is significant. The approach will need to be tested, which will include working with customers and residents. The business case will need to be built for a whole-organisation programme to be rolled out and this project will be a significant element of our transformation and modernisation work for the next 3 years and essential for the Council to move to a sustainable model.

### **3. THE MODERNISATION AND IMPROVEMENT PROGRAMME - RUSHMOOR 2020**

- 3.1 To ensure we address all the recommendations and improvements set out in the Peer Challenge, respond to the staff survey and take forward the opportunity offered by the Customer Experience Project, it is proposed that a new Modernisation and Improvement Programme be established. The Rushmoor 2020 Programme will bring together the Council's plans for improvement and financial sustainability into a single delivery programme led by one of the Council's Directors. The core programme will be completed by December 2020 and the overarching outcome will be a much more customer focussed, agile and financially sustainable organisation. It will be built around delivering an excellent customer experience through a clear long term vision and priorities, developing people, improving performance management and governance, achieving financial sustainability, embracing the concept of becoming a digital council and supportive communications.
- 3.2 The importance of the programme should not be underestimated if the Council is going to be fit for the future and financially sustainable and a seminar has been arranged for all Members on the 27 June 2018. It will also be important to engage members on an ongoing basis with the Council's modernisation and improvement journey and it is proposed that this is achieved through;
- (i) A new Task and Finish Group established under the Policy and Projects Advisory Board to help shape projects and policies associated with the Rushmoor 2020 Programme and particularly the Customer Experience Project
  - (ii) A 'Rushmoor 2020 Steering Group', established to oversee, drive and steer the programme to successful delivery. The Steering Group to be comprised of the Deputy Leader, the Portfolio Holder for Customers, Digital & Rushmoor 2020, the Corporate and Democratic Services Portfolio holder with the new officer Executive Leadership Team.
  - (iii) The formal performance reporting quarterly to the Cabinet and consideration by the new Scrutiny Panel as required by Members.
- 3.4 An outline of the content of the Rushmoor 2020 Programme is included at Appendix 3. More detailed delivery plans will be developed over the next 3-4

months with key decisions and requests for investment coming forward to Cabinet for approval in the usual way.

#### **4. DELIVERING RUSHMOOR 2020**

- 4.1 To deliver the new Council Plan and priorities whilst modernising and delivering the Rushmoor 2020 programme will need a different approach to organisational leadership and management moving forward. The Chief Executive has concluded that some changes to the Council's senior management arrangements will be required and, in his role as Head of Paid Service, has produced and consulted on proposals for a restructure of the senior management team and consequential changes to service groupings. These proposals and supporting rationale are set out in a separate report on this agenda.
- 4.2 The initial resourcing arrangements to support the set-up and delivery of the first phase of the programme will be established in the Senior Management Structures report where it is proposed that the programme will be led by the Executive Director (Customers, Digital and Rushmoor 2020) and supported by two Heads of Service and officers from the Projects and Improvement Team.
- 4.3 It is worth noting at this point that, although changes at senior leadership level are important, for the organisation to work with the level of change that will be demanded by Rushmoor 2020, an investment in the development of all of the Council's managers and employees will be required. As part of Rushmoor 2020, a new approach in terms of how the Council develops its people will be put in place. The Council will plan to put in place a new Leadership and Management Development Strategy and Workforce Strategy by the end of 2018/19.

#### **5. CONSULTATION AND ENGAGEMENT**

- 5.1 The Chief Executive has used his first 12 months to engage with staff, members and partners as well as external organisations to help establish what needed to change in order for the Council to deliver its priorities and how the Council might approach this.
- 5.2 For a programme of this scale considerable engagement will be needed to take forward the various elements.

#### **6. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 6.1 Rushmoor 2020 is being established in part to ensure we address the financial gap set out in the Medium Term Financial Strategy. The programme, which will absorb the remaining projects from the former 8-Point Plan and incorporate the next phase of the Customer Experience Project will need to contribute a minimum of £300,000 per annum to the Council's £3,785,000 savings requirements by the end of 2019/20.
- 6.2 There will be investment required to support the implementation of some parts of the programme, which initially can be met from the as yet unallocated

balance of £300,000 within the Service Improvement Fund. This fund has been built up over time to support invest-to-save initiatives and service efficiencies and Cabinet are requested to approve use of the fund with spend on the programme being reported through the usual budget monitoring process. Any further investment above these levels will need to come forward for consideration with a business case and/or as part of the budget building process for 2019/20.

## **7. CONCLUSIONS**

- 7.1 This report brings together a number of improvement initiatives under a new overarching programme to be known as Rushmoor 2020. Its focus is to ensure that going forward the Council modernises and achieves financial sustainability whilst at the same time delivering excellent services meeting the demands of the local community.

### **BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS:**

Medium Term Financial Strategy 2018/19 - 2020/21  
Peer Challenge Feedback Report  
Staff Survey  
Senior Management Structures report CEX 0318

### **CONTACT DETAILS:**

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## TARGET OPERATING MODEL

To provide a framework to support the changes needed and help members and staff understand what will be different a simple, straightforward framework or target operating model has been developed.

The model builds on the principles of 'Listen, learn and deliver better' and is based on a number of elements as follows:



### Invest in people

This sees an approach that increases investment in people and includes enhanced programmes related to skills, retention, recruitment and talent. In an increasingly competitive environment, attracting the right people is essential to achieving corporate objectives.

### Leadership

Improving leadership is an essential component of inspiring the best from people thereby improving services. The Council will adopt a professional leadership approach to include collaboration, being strong and decisive, leading by example, being visible and adopting a strategic approach where required.



### Modernisation

In modernising how people and teams work services can be improved, be made more efficient and offer a better quality of life for people. This includes anywhere/anytime working, one team / one council ethos and being fit for future particularly in relation to the use of technology.

### Commercial

Increasing numbers of Councils are acting commercially both in terms of taking commercial decisions in a competitive sense and in terms of thinking in a more business-like manner. The Council will look to develop people to act in this way.

### Productive and Efficient

In terms of being more productive and efficient, the emphasis will be on getting things done quickly and right the first time with decision making at the first point of contact where possible.

### Excellence in Service Delivery

Achieving the levels already outlined and investing both time, energy and money in cultural shift will lead to excellence in the provision of services throughout the Council.

### Customer First

Ultimately, the model outlined is all about putting the customer first and at the heart of what the Council does. The aspiration is to not just meet customer expectations but to exceed them every time through the right minds and investment in people.