



Report of the Deputy Chief Executive / Director of Corporate Services

Organisational Transformation Corporate Delivery Committee –
28 June 2022

Transformation & Future Council Development Progress Report

Purpose:	To update the committee on recent progress regarding the corporate well-being objective – “Transformation & Future Council development”.
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For Information	

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The council did not only maintain services throughout the pandemic but is well underway on its journey to refocus the Council. The work of both the Remobilise and Refocus phase have continued throughout the new pressures of the COVID pandemic and continued impact of COVID. The Councils response has had an impact on progress; however, work has continued the agendas to Recover and Refocus the Council.
- 1.2 Progress has continued delivering the Transformation & Future Council well-being objective. Key areas of progress for the year includes working to modernise and transform the Council through our Achieving Better Together programme. In the short term, this is focused on actions and interventions related to Covid-19, including how we emerge and recover from the pandemic. In the medium to long term, the programme will build on what has changed because of the pandemic and how we can deliver services in different ways to help tackle rising demand and reducing revenue budgets.

- 1.3 The future financial landscape continues to be increasingly challenging therefore innovation and transformation will continue to be vital to maintain local priorities. Work is also ongoing in relation to the implementation of the provisions of the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021.
- 1.4 The information below sets out the background and current position with regards to the wellbeing objective work programme.

2. Background

- 2.1 The Council has made good progress and has been assessed as 'owning our ambition'. Across the board complex change projects are being delivered that, involve resources and staff from all levels and Directorates, often also including external partners. Partnership funding bids are becoming increasingly common. The Council was in a good position to respond to the pandemic because of previous change and transformation work. This continues now into recovery and the new transformation programme, working in new ways and assessing the risk of this routinely and in a managed way. This is evidenced by the progress update.
- 2.2 On 15th October 2020 Cabinet approved the new "From Recovery to Transformation" report detailing the 3 Phases from recovery through to the "Swansea – Achieving Better Together, Transformation Strategy & Programme Framework 2022 – 2026".
- 2.3 To assist the Achieving Better Together Programme, Swansea Council's internal audit team carried out an examination of the programme, governance, and structure. An Assurance Level of **'High'** was awarded. This indicates that 'there is a sound system of internal control designed to achieve the programme objectives and the controls are being consistently applied.' There were no recommendations following the examination.
- 2.4 The strategic aims of Swansea – Achieving Better Together are:
 - The core purpose of the Council
 - Transforming services to be effective and efficient
 - Greater collaboration with other Councils, organisations, community groups and residents, with a focus on regionalisation
 - Balancing the budget for current and future years
 - Greater and more meaningful engagements with our residents and community
 - To meet the aspirations and targets within the Medium-Term Financial Plan.
- 2.5 The programme phases are not linear but overlap so the work undertaken in the prior phase will inform the next phase:

Phase 1 – Short Term	Re-mobilise	Recovering, restarting & adapting a wide range of Council Services
Phase 2 – Medium Term	Refocus (Up to May 2022)	A strategic response to support the city to emerge and grow from the crisis delivering our corporate priorities
Phase 3 – Long Term (work in Phases 1 and 2 will support the actions in Phase 3)	Reshape (After May 2022)	Longer term City and County regeneration and development strategy

- 2.6 The Policy Development Committees (PDC's) provided a support function to the programme and work-streams. The Recovery & Future Generation PDC's supported the overarching Achieving Better Together work programme.

<i>WORKPLAN 2022</i>		
<i>Council Objective</i>	<i>Theme</i>	<i>Strategy/Policy</i>
<p>Transformation and future council development - Working together to build a Council that is Sustainable, Efficient & Effective in what and how it delivers its services with the citizen at the heart of all that we do.</p>	Ensure we have the right Leadership and Management in place to support the new ways of working and organisation culture	Workforce Strategy Theme 1 – Strand 1&2
	Create a workforce fit for the future	Theme 2 – Strand 3/4/5
	Ensure we are an Employer of Choice now and in the future	Workforce Strategy Theme 3 – Strand 6&7
	Supporting Our Workforce and providing a clear roadmap for health and wellbeing that is accessible and fit for purpose	Workforce Strategy Theme 4 – Strand 8
	Develop an approach to developing or growing by using resources in a way that allows for them to renew or continue to exist for others.	Sustainable Development Policy
	Give local people and partners an opportunity both to design services as an equal partner with	Corporate Centre Co-production Strategy

	the council and to play roles in delivering the services that they have designed.	
	Support Swansea to become a Human Rights City	Human Rights City Project
	Supporting wider conversations / engagement with wider groups	Communication, Engagement & Participation Strategy/s
	Community Safety	

2.7 The work-stream leads also worked closely with other PDC's on their individual projects, plans and policies. Examples include, but are not limited to:

Work stream	PDC (Policy Development Committees)	Agenda Item	Date
Community Support	People PDC	Volunteering Strategy initial workshop	October 2021
Economy & Environment	Economy, Environment & Infrastructure PDC	Swansea Bay City Deal Skills and Talent business case	September 2021
Community Support	Poverty Reduction PDC	Swansea Council Tackling Poverty Strategy Revision	July 2021
Community Support	Poverty Reduction PDC	Promoting Affordable Credit Draft Policy	June 2021
Economy & Environment	Economy, Environment & Infrastructure PDC	Economic Recovery Plan. High Street Regeneration. Green Fleet Policy	October/November 2021

3. Transformation Well Underway

- 3.1 The Achieving Better Together programme is clear in its message that the purpose of the programme is to enable a sustainable, efficient, and effective organisation with the citizens of Swansea at the heart. The remobilise phase initiated a plan that has done just that, it called on resources from across the organisation to support residents, communities, and businesses through the winter omicron pandemic as a priority.
- 3.2 Work is ongoing in relation to the continued recovery, refocussing and reshaping the Council and is currently structured around the following work streams;
- Care Services
 - Education and Learning
 - Future Workforce and Equalities
 - Community Support
 - Economy and Environment
- 3.3 The work-streams have shown notable examples of working together and in partnerships to achieve outcomes for our organisation, staff and the citizens of Swansea since the start of the refocus plan in March 2021.
- 3.4 The work- streams are working towards realising many benefits and successful outcomes for Staff, Citizens, and the Organisation.
- 3.5 The refocus phase of the programme has set the agreed budget for 2022-23, refreshed the Medium-Term Financial Plan, and is supporting the council to deliver its ongoing corporate priorities and plans, whilst adapting to address the impacts coming out of the previous COVID pandemic.
- 3.6 The draft Workforce Strategy for 2022-27 has been developed following extensive consultation with Members, senior leadership, Trade Unions, and a cross-section the workforce from all Directorates. The Strategy is aligned with the Achieving Better Together Programme, Digital Strategy, and the Wellbeing of Future Generations Act.
- 3.7 The Strategy contains four key Themes and nine accompanying Strands. Several activities identified under each Strand will support delivery of the Strategy and expect to have a positive impact on sickness figures.
- 3.8 A new Strategic Equality Plan for 2020/24 with six new Strategic Equality Objectives was published in 2020, which drew on the Equalities and Human Rights Commissioner's report, and the outcome of the Equalities Scrutiny Enquiry. The Plan also involved the Equality Champions.

- 3.9 A Workforce Equalities Group has been established for the Council. The Council also undertook an extensive consultation and engagement exercise and collated an evidence base of statistical information relating to protected characteristics in a Swansea context to help inform the development of the plan.
- 3.10 The Council has secured funding to procure support for a project to build on the excellent work, implement lesson's learnt during Covid around working with citizens, partners & communities across all service areas in the Council.
- 3.11 The regional partnership between Swansea Council, Carmarthenshire County Council, Pembrokeshire County Council and Neath & Port Talbot Council was successfully awarded the next round of Digital Transformation Funding to develop Internet of Things capability.
- 3.12 The Digital programme aspect of the Swansea Bay City Deal continues to make good progress with partners taking part in a 5G workshop facilitated by Deloitte and collaborating on a Connectivity Infrastructure Accelerator (DCIA (Digital Connectivity Infrastructure Accelerator)) bid.
- 3.13 The Council has delivered blended learning (a mix of online and face-to-face). Last year it was 100% online only due to the pandemic, which was reflected in the reduced enrolments and reduction in courses being delivered whilst this way of working was rapidly introduced and trailed. The other meaningful change is that the Council has not applied a charge to our Learning for Life Courses (Adult Learning e.g., music, arts, cookery, yoga etc.) due to the uncertainty of consistent delivery both with the platforms being used (Google Classroom) and delivery of face-to-face provision with infection control measures / impact of isolating / lockdowns etc. The Digital, Family Learning and Essential Skills courses are always free, funded by Core and a Community Learning Grant from Welsh Government.
- 3.14 Covid19 increased the amount of online and telephone workload in the Council's contact centre. A considerable number of applications were developed to support Swansea residents and businesses and to issue payments because of the pandemic. This continued into 2021-22. Swansea Digital Services, at noticeably short notice, set up a virtual call centre to take the phone calls from members of the public requesting vaccination certificates.
- 3.15 The Digital Strategy has been updated and is being discussed – this lays out the roadmap for the next four years and draws on the Welsh Government, Central Government, and Local Government Digital Strategies.
- 3.16 The Council continues to promote the Welsh Language and is currently assessing the model for the new Community Hubs. The new Council website went live in August 2021, which has improved access to

information, online forms, and payments for residents. It has undergone a review to ensure it is available in Welsh and English.

- 3.17 The Re-focus phase has set the 2022/23 budget and refreshed the MTFP (Medium Term Financial Plan). This work was undertaken in the Recovery, Reshaping and Budget Strategy Board and will be closely monitored each month.

4. Next Phase - Reshape

- 4.1 The next phase will look beyond 2022, it will be subject to the priorities of the new council, a new Chief Executive, corporate plan, and strategy for the council.

- 4.2 As well as identifying the priorities in the short and medium term, the Achieving Better Together framework aims to set the foundations for establishing the longer-term shape of the council, looking ahead to the next 20 years to 2040.

- 4.3 During the preparation of phase 3 and delivery of phase 2 we are working towards:

- Developing the framework for the future delivery programme – Phase 3 of Achieving Better Together – Reshape.
- Ensuring Strategies and action plans (housing, Schools, economy, social care) are embedded and change is visible and increasing in pace.
- A reviewed and updated corporate plan
- Ensuring the culture of the organisation is aligned to the delivery of the corporate plan
- Ensure all priority service areas have new models of delivery maturing
- Delivering a balanced budget and long term MTFP that is sustainable

- 4.4 The Achieving Better Together Programme recognises changes in strategic context, brought about by changes in both legislation and priority focus areas, including:

- Wellbeing of Future Generations Act
- Local Government & Elections Wales Act
- Additional Learning Needs Act
- Regionalisation Agenda
- City Deal & City Centre Regeneration (Swansea Central Phase 1)
- Smart City and Digital Strategy
- Responding to Climate Change
- Ten years of Austerity
- Covid-19 Pandemic long term impacts

- Brexit implications
- Wellbeing assessment outcomes and Wellbeing Plan

The programme intends to meet these new challenges, building upon the successes already achieved as it progresses into phase 3 - Reshape.

- 4.5 The budget and medium-term finance plan progressed through the process for approval and is helping to shape the focus of the work-streams for 2022/23.
- 4.6 Work is ongoing in relation to the implementation of the provisions of the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021.
- 4.7 Due to the uncertainty with COVID implications, the Council must be vigilant and prepared to revert to response mode if required. However, work is continuing to build the foundations and scope the work that will be required of the work-streams for the reshaping the Council, as well as undertaking recovery and refocus work.
- 4.8 The Achieving Better Together Programme will continue to contribute towards the achievement of the national well-being goals.

- *A prosperous Wales* – Supporting and training the Council’s workforce to deliver transformed services that provide the most sustainable outcomes for residents.
- *A Resilient Wales* – The Managing the Present and Shaping the Future, Swansea Council – From Recovery to Transformation Strategy underpins our recovery from Covid-19 and aims to transform services, deliver better outcomes for residents, and achieve financial sustainability with reduced carbon footprint.
- *A Healthier Wales* – The programme work streams have projects in phase 2 – (Refocus) that aim to: encourage greater community ownership, improved health, and wellbeing for staff, provide active lifestyle and healthy living for our citizens e.g., our approach to Housing and the Active Travel Project.
- *A more Equal Wales* – Providing the opportunity for local citizens to influence how policies are written and services are developed through the development of a co-production strategy.
- *A Wales of Cohesive Communities* – The Community Response work-stream has a strong focus on community involvement. Projects include supporting community volunteering, Local Area Coordinators expansion and working with third Sector and other statutory and non-statutory partners in Swansea and encourage the continuation of community relationships.
- *A Wales of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language* – Through the coproduction framework we will establish a diverse forum for community

volunteers to be involve in the decision-making process and give them an opportunity to express their views and opinions. The programme will improve the communication and engagement with communities, which includes welsh medium provision.

• *A globally responsible Wales* – The Achieving Better Together programme has a focus on the future and delivering social, environmental, cultural, economic, and financial sustainability through the work-streams. Any decision making considers future impacts e.g., climate change.

5. Integrated Impact Assessment Implications

5.1 The Council is subject to the Equality Act (Public Sector Equality Duty and the socio-economic duty), the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 and the Welsh Language (Wales) Measure, and must in the exercise of their functions, have due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Acts.
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
- Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
- Deliver better outcomes for those people who experience socio-economic disadvantage
- Consider opportunities for people to use the Welsh language
- Treat the Welsh language no less favourably than English.
- Ensure that the needs of the present are met without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.

5.2 Our Integrated Impact Assessment process ensures that we have paid due regard to the above.

5.3 There are no integrated assessment implications associated with this report.

6. Legal Implications

6.1 There are no legal implications.

7. Financial Implications

7.1 There are no direct financial implications associated with this report itself. The programme, its governance and operational delivery, via the work-streams, will help provide the assurance mechanisms for the duration of the medium-term finance plan and beyond, that the planned savings, but equally the correspondingly larger investment of new resources, will be delivered and resources targeted flexibly and appropriately as the wider environment and financial outlook for the

public sector and the wider UK and global economy evolves. The overriding aims are to achieve value for money, remain financially sustainable, directly aid, and assist the recovery and achieve better outcomes, together.

Background papers: 'None'

Appendices:

Appendix 1 IIA (Integrated Impact Assessments) Screening Form