



Report of the Deputy Leader (Service Transformation)

Service Improvement & Finance Scrutiny Performance Panel 17 January 2023

Review of Sustainable Swansea Programme

Purpose:	To provide the Panel with an update on the Sustainable Swansea Programme and share the learning to inform subsequent corporate transformation activity.
Content:	This report provides an overview of the Sustainable Swansea - Fit for the Future programme and updates the committee on implementation of the commissioning reviews as well as identifying key achievements and lessons learnt.
Councillors are being asked to:	Consider and provide views on the information provided. This report is for information only.
Lead Councillor:	Councillor Andrea Lewis, Deputy Leader (Service Transformation)
Lead Officer:	Martin Nicholls, Chief Executive

1. Background

1.1 The Sustainable Swansea – Fit for the Future delivery programme was approved by Cabinet in July 2014 and was subject to further review and refresh at Cabinet in July 2015. The programme had three objectives, to:

- transform services
- ensure financial sustainability
- improve outcomes for residents.

1.2 The programme was introduced to address the financial, demographic and sustainability challenges faced by Swansea Council at that time, focusing on the core future purpose of the Council, the transformation of services and models of delivery, greater collaboration with other councils, local organisations, community groups and residents, sustainability, and prevention. The objectives were aligned with the Council's twelve budget

principles, i.e., everything is included, engagement, less money, demonstrating efficiency, cutting red tape, full cost recovery, increased income, different models of delivery, supporting those at risk, the evidence base, sustainable outcomes, and personal responsibilities.

- 1.3 Any work on service changes and budgets across the Council was included in the programme with the aim of harnessing efforts in one direction and avoiding duplication. The programme initially consisted of:
- a strategic framework (core purpose of the council, future council, policy framework and the medium-term financial plan)
 - 4 work streams (efficiency, new models of delivery and prevention and stopping service)
 - 14 delivery strands¹
 - numerous change projects
- 1.4 The programme was reviewed in 2015 as the pace of delivery was slower than anticipated (albeit that service specific savings of around £16 million were delivered by the programme in 2014-15) and a further £70-80 million savings were expected to be required over the subsequent three years. As a result, the programme focused on the delivery on the following budget savings:
- Continuation and development of service delivery savings approved by Council in February 2015 and subsequently reviewed.
 - Other elements of the Sustainable Swansea Delivery Programme approved by Cabinet in July 2014 and reviewed by Cabinet in July 2015.
 - Cash freeze in Schools Delegated Budgets
- 1.5 The review also identified a lack of traction and ownership in some areas and the need to delay or revise previously agreed projects to ensure robust governance arrangements were in place. It concluded that, while the strategic aims of the programme and the 4 workstreams were fit for purpose and should remain unchanged, work should be undertaken to embed and integrate major change programmes especially those undertaken by Social Services and Education to capture all of the savings. Moreover, whilst the review recommended retaining the existing four workstreams, it also recommended a significant focus on three new key areas: Commercialism, Commissioning and Prevention, to secure long-term change and savings.
- 1.6 Seventeen commissioning reviews were undertaken as part of the Commissioning Delivery Strand, to identify optimal operating models that delivered the right services in the right way to meet the needs of customers. Appendix 1 provides an update on the commissioning reviews that reported to Committee as being AMBER in November 2018.

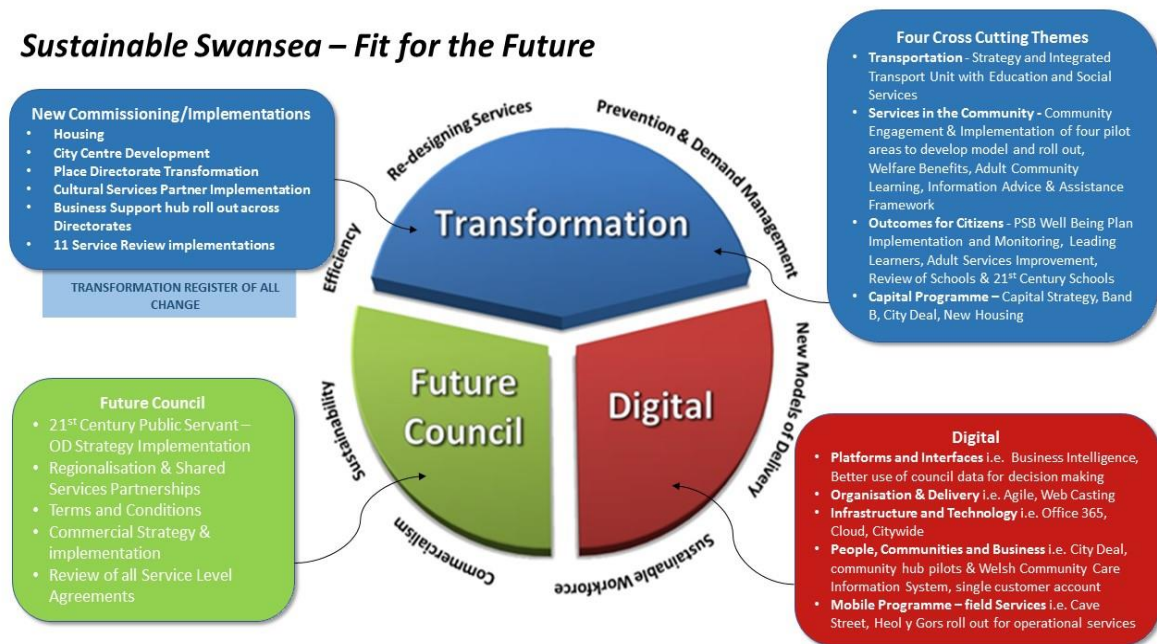
¹ Continuous Improvement, Workforce, Support Services, Assets, Third Party spend, Income & Charging, Customer contact, Commissioning services, Collaboration, Community action, Demand management, Early intervention, Council priorities, Future Council

2. Projects and Programme Governance

- 2.1 Structured programme management was used to govern and manage the Sustainable Swansea Programme. The Corporate Management Team (CMT) and Cabinet reviewed progress monthly. The programme was sponsored by the Deputy Leader and led by the Director of Resources / Corporate Services, supported by the Chief Transformation Officer / Head of Service at the time. The programme was reviewed annually in parallel with budget setting to:
- Report on and close those projects that had been delivered.
 - Incorporate changes from the internal and external environment, which were either emerging or long-term priorities that would impact the Council's sustainability.
 - Evaluate all projects and make appropriate changes, e.g., where legislation, new thinking / models, changes in the Corporate Plan or Local Well-being Plan, or changes from the external environment influence the original scope, therefore the project needed to change / morph.
 - Incorporate priorities emerging from annual budget discussions between Senior Management and Members, as well as any changes in the revised MTFP.
 - Review lessons learnt with stakeholders (e.g., Welsh Audit Office (WAO), Welsh Government, partners, and many other stakeholders) and incorporate learning into the next phase.
 - In addition, Scrutiny undertook pre-decision Scrutiny of any programme recommendations going before Cabinet. Scrutiny also reviewed progress annually.
- 2.2 During the early phases of the Sustainable Swansea – Fit for the Future programme, Cabinet, and the Executive Board (Corporate Management Team) provided strategic oversight but then a Programme Board was established chaired by Corporate Director of Resources and comprising the Leader, the Cabinet Member with responsibility for the programme, the Director of People Services, and the Director of Place (Work Stream Sponsors).
- 2.3 The programme was implemented by a Programme Delivery Team which included a Programme Manager, a Strand Lead for each of the 14 Delivery Strands (continuous improvement, workforce, support services, assets, third party spend, income and charging, customer contact, commissioning services, collaboration, community action, demand management, early intervention, Council priorities and Future Council).
- 2.4 During 2015, governance arrangements were reviewed, and arrangements were put in place to strengthen oversight and the implementation of the programme. A Transformation and ICT Programme Office was established, and a Sustainable Swansea Programme Manager appointed. The Council's Leadership Group was also incorporated within the governance arrangements, accountable to the Executive Board and embedding change across the organisation. Although the 4 Work Streams remained, the Delivery

Strands were revised to include modernising ICT, promoting safer independence, supporting children and families and an education strategy. The income and charging Delivery Strand was also revised to include a broader focus on commercialism under the efficiency workstream and the commissioning services strand was also revised into commissioning reviews and commissioning implementation under the new models of working strands.

Sustainable Swansea – Fit for the Future



3. Key Outcomes and Achievements

3.1 The 2015 Review identified that the programme provided a platform for wider debate about long term future change and enabled the development of new innovative ideas and projects such as the Prevention Budget and a Community Development Fund.

3.2 In total the programme is estimated to have delivered around £70 million of savings over its lifetime, including £16 million in 2014-15 alone. Key outcomes and impacts included:

- Achieving a reduction in Business Support functions by removing duplication and streamlining processes across all Directorates. Over the life of the Business Support work, it is estimated the Council has saved £3.6 million. Commercial opportunities within the Civic buildings were delivered by developing a more modern, commercial, sustainable, and social space for staff and visitors. Implementation of the Service Centre and Transactions Team incorporated the employee services helpdesk. Significant improvements in self-service options for officers and managers streamlined processes and delivered resource benefits in the Service Centre. The services, which are available to the public through Contact Swansea, had been increased to include Street Lighting, Parks & Leisure.

Business Intelligence now hosted within Legal Services, including FOI and SAR.

- A significant increase in income generation by increasing fees and charges to 5%, both to meet demand and to bring the Council in line with other authorities and organisations.
- The Waste Service increased recycling rates, which reduced residual waste at the five sites to 2,200 tonnes in 2017-18, down from over 11,000 in 2015/16, which is around an 80% reduction. Waste changes also supported achievement of a 62% recycling target in 2018-19 – the Welsh Government target was 58% at that time.
- Delivered a new Leisure delivery model. The Council started a new partnership with Freedom Leisure on the 1st October 2018, which was to bring investment and sustainability to these services for the future.
- The Council was in the process of growing a sustainable workforce model through traineeship and apprenticeship schemes across the Council, e.g., fifteen in Corporate Building Services in 2018/19 and a further twelve in 2019/20.
- Gower Centres had widened their reach so that more young people and families attend on weekends, offering a sustainable and more inclusive approach.
- MyClydach launched in October 2018 being the first Services in the Community Hub pilot delivered, bringing multiple services together into one place including virtual support.
- Co-production had begun within Adult Services to help redesign services around direct payments and parent and carer groups. The Corporate Co-Production Strategy was developed to expand this approach across more areas, in order to increase resident and business involvement in the design of future services.
- Launch of the commercial cleaning services pilot for vulnerable adults in their own homes, building on partnership working with the third sector, such as the Red Cross and Age Cymru.
- Delivery of new digital tools. Rollout of Skype for Business formed part of the agile working programme and enables staff and Councillors to use instant messaging, internet voice calls, video conferencing and virtual meetings. This new technology had enabled the Council to improve efficiency and effectiveness and will reduce travel time and expense claims.

3.3 Examples of what went well also encompassed the following aspects:

- Engagement: The programme was positively received by residents and employees and Participation Cymru training was delivered successfully. During the engagement process the Council had been more open than previously about the challenges it faced.
- Strategic View: A platform became available for a much wider debate about the future and links were able to be made to the Future of the Council.
- Programme Shape: The projects captured the right things in a logical manner, aligned to other major projects
- Redundancies: The Council was able to avoid compulsory redundancies

- Funding for Change: Included the Transformation Fund (backfill, training provided), the Community Development Fund (pump priming community action) and the Prevention Budget (innovative ideas/projects).

4. Lessons Learnt

4.1 As can be seen from the list above the programme achieved significant savings and facilitated change across the council. However, as with all programmes there were challenges and lessons to be learned² including the importance of:

- Having clearly specified projects, roles and accountabilities and monitoring arrangements
- Ensuring budget clarity, in respect of savings achievement and budget adjustments being made
- Clear process for bidding for investment in projects
- Tracking intended benefits and outcomes, especially for continuous transformation activity and cross cutting themes, and understanding the impact of changes on users as well as the council
- Phasing change to manage the impact on service delivery to reduce the risk of exceeding service capacity to deliver or negatively impact upon service provision.
- Having staff resources available to support the projects and consistent approach to the use of external support
- Balancing quicker efficiencies with preparing the ground for longer term, more preventative changes
- Effective engagement and co-production with residents and staff (see box)

Sustainable Swansea Programme Examples of Engagement Activity

We engaged with residents on the wider aims of Sustainable Swansea, the core purpose of the Council and the need for residents and communities to do more to help themselves. “Continuing the Conversation” was used to get these messages across. We also undertook consultation and Equality Impact Assessments on specific budget proposals with a focus on:

- What the Council will stop doing – with clear “stories” about why this is necessary and what this will mean for you.
- Our future relationship with residents – helping you to help yourself.
- Behaviour change – targeted social marketing to support demand management priorities.
- Reviewing the narrative with Cabinet and the role of Cabinet Members in community engagement events.

We engaged with employees on Sustainable Swansea and budget issues using roadshows, StaffNet and team meetings. Further work was needed to cascade this down to staff via “manager led conversations”. The involvement of Cabinet

² Lessons learned summarise the feedback received from officers involved in the development and delivery of the Sustainable Swansea Programme

Members in staff engagement was also considered to help engage employees on the “bigger picture”, not just Sustainable Swansea. As part of the Council’s commitment to meaningful engagement we:

- Ran engagement training for Members and Officers using Participation Cymru
- Held staff roadshows and workshops on Sustainable Swansea and the future shape of the Council exercise
- Briefed all Members on the revised programme and how we could support them in engaging local residents in things like community action, changing expectations
- Ran local participation events across the City to engage the widest cross section of people that we could

During the programme it became clear that engagement needed to be more relevant and dynamic. Newly developed strategies included:

- Using the new StaffNet to generate debate on the hot issues
- Using smaller (ideally cross service), workshops to debate the issues with employees
- Using the Innovation Community as “barometers” to assess the messages, how they are delivered and received

5. Conclusions

5.1 The Sustainable Swansea Programme was effective, enabling the council to deliver significant change to services and its operating model, which improved service outcomes while delivering around £70 million of savings over its lifetime.

5.2 Despite changes needing to be made to some projects and others taking longer than expected to complete, there is no doubt that the programme achieved its objectives of:

- transforming services
- ensuring financial sustainability
- improving outcomes for residents

5.3 The annual reviews allowed the programme to evolve and adapt to changes in the external environment (e.g., budget) and continually to improve how the programme was governed and projects prioritised and progressed. The lessons learned during the programme summarised in paragraph 4.1 above were used to inform the development of the Achieving Better Together Programme which succeeded Sustainable Swansea in 2019-20.

6. Moving on: Recovery Plan

6.1 On 15 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’.

- 6.2 Following the first phase to 'remobilise' the Council following the pandemic, the second 'refocus' phase of Achieving Better Together supported the Council to deliver its ongoing corporate priorities and plans, whilst adapting to address the impacts coming out of the COVID crisis. The delivery was through a formal process within the following work streams:
- Care Services.
 - Education and Learning.
 - Future Workforce and Equalities.
 - Community Support.
 - Economy and Environment.
- 6.3 Refocussing the Council set about creating the foundations to support the longer-term culture change required to reshape the Council, encouraging employees to adopt behaviours and mind-sets that are required to support a sustainable, efficient, and effective future Swansea Council. Examples include:
- A renewed Agile Policy (including staff wellbeing).
 - Development of a Coaching Network (including learning & development opportunities).
 - Relaunch & re branding of the Leadership hub (Let's Talk).
 - Relaunch of the Ideas Hub.
 - Involvement Workshops.
 - A flexible working project enabling staff to work from any location, including from home, and exploring hours of work.
 - Various Network Groups established e.g., Diverse Staff Support Group and a Cross Council Community Response Group.
 - Staff Story Book launch.
- 6.4 The next phase of transformation for Swansea Council is looking beyond 2022, it is taking account of the priorities of the new Council, a new Chief Executive, and a new corporate plan for the Council.

7. Integrated Assessment Implications

- 7.1 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.

7.2 The Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 mandates that public bodies in Wales must carry out sustainable development. Sustainable development means the process of improving the economic, social, environmental, and cultural well-being of Wales by taking action, in accordance with the sustainable development principle, aimed at achieving the well-being goals.

7.3 Our Integrated Impact Assessment (IIA) process ensures we have paid due regard to the above. It also considers other key issues and priorities, such as poverty and social exclusion, community cohesion, carers, the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) and Welsh language.

7.4 An IIA screening form has been completed (Appendix 2). There are no potential impacts identified and no requirement for involvement or engagement. Scrutiny councillors will be asked to consider the information provided and give views. This report is for information only.

8. Financial Implications

8.1 There are no financial implications associated with this report.

9. Legal Implications

9.1 There are no legal implications associated with this report.

Background Papers: None

Appendices:

Appendix 1: Update on 2018 update on commissioning reviews

Appendix 2: IIA Screening Forum