

**EPPING FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL  
NOTES OF A MEETING OF TRANSFORMATION TASK AND FINISH PANEL  
HELD ON THURSDAY, 29 JUNE 2017  
IN COMMITTEE ROOM 2, CIVIC OFFICES, HIGH STREET, EPPING  
AT 7.30 - 9.11 PM**

<b>Members Present:</b>	A Patel (Chairman), S Kane (Vice-Chairman), N Avey, R Baldwin, R Brookes, K Chana, D Dorrell, S Heap, L Hughes, M Sartin and B Surtees
<b>Other members present:</b>	C Whitbread and G Mohindra
<b>Apologies for Absence:</b>	R Bassett (Vice Chairman of the Council), N Bedford and H Whitbread
<b>Officers Present</b>	G Chipp (Chief Executive), P Maddock (Assistant Director (Accountancy)), D Bailey (Head of Transformation), O Shaw (Head of Customer Service), S Hill (Assistant Director (Governance)) and A Hendry (Senior Democratic Services Officer)

**1. SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS (COUNCIL MINUTE 39 - 23.7.02)**

It was noted that there were no substitute members for this meeting.

**2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest made pursuant to the Member Code of Conduct.

**3. TERMS OF REFERENCE**

The Panel considered and agreed their Terms of Reference.

**4. TRANSFORMATION PROGRAMME**

The Panel considered the report that set out to answer the questions (a to r) posed at the special Resources Select Committee meeting held on 10 April 2017.

Mr Bailey the Head of Transformation took the Panel through the report, highlighting that transformation was about change management.

Councillor Surtees asked if there was an overarching aim or idea for the whole organisation and Mr Bailey replied that effectively change did not stop instead it ebb and flowed over time. Councillor Chris Whitbread, Leader of the Council, noted that it was to make the Council fit for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century and was not something that would just be happening now; it would go on for decades. It was important to have a low Council tax and to keep our front line services. Councillor Kane added that it was best looked at as a way of managing that change. Mr Bailey noted that it was useful to note that transformation was charged with realising four key benefits, that of:

- Recognising what customers' value about our services and placing them at the heart of everything we do;
- Focussing on getting things right first time through joined up services;
- Reducing red tape to simplify how we work; and

- Delivery of resource savings and income generation, to keep Council Tax low.

The vast majority of work was to deliver the Corporate Plan and deliver the various projects.

Councillor Sartin asked what would have happened if the Council had not set up the Transformation Programme. Mr Bailey answered that we would have continued the way we were; with some good projects and a majority of so-so projects and some less than good. We were now looking for a larger range of change than we have in the past. Mr Chipp, the Chief Executive, agreed that progress would have been slower and less joined up. We would be able to have big structural changes on the back of this and would be able to look at projects on a corporate basis and prioritise them. Councillor Whitbread said that this pulled all the projects together, such as putting two buildings into one, which was a bold move. Areas such as the customer facing project were making this Council less of a silo based organisation than we used to be.

Councillor Avey wondered about the use of external contractors and would it be better in house.

Mr Bailey spoke about the answer to question 'd' and the four drivers for change as detailed in the Corporate Plan 2015/20. They were:

- Our customers and their needs are changing;
- Our customers expect modern, customer focussed services;
- Our customers demand well-managed, value for money services; and
- Our customers want us to reduce our costs and protect front line services.

The new draft Corporate Plan would be made available on line. The management of all change within the authority was organised into workstreams, each containing a set of transformation programmes and projects, arranged in a timeline as tranches. Existing projects from the Corporate Plan: Key Action Plan will feature in the workstreams, alongside new projects.

Initial analysis of corporate strategies and plans had led to the identification and organisation of transformation opportunities into four workstreams:

- Customer experience;
- Business culture;
- Resources, accommodation and technology; and
- Major projects (C-073-2015/16).

Councillor Surtees said that we wanted better services and not just better delivered ones. Councillor Whitbread noted that we used to do highways better than the County. We do deliver better services, just look at leisure services and what we did for it by putting it out to contract.

Councillor Surtees asked what Business Culture was. He was told that was how the council ran the business behind the services it provided. Mr Chipp added that the business culture introduced a set of corporate values etc. It also helped reduce the 9 silos down to the 4 we have now, although there was still some vestige of this left. We needed to be more agile in the way we worked especially in accommodation. We needed to drive improvement constantly. We tended to try things, make small changes and see if they worked and then push them out across the council. We could also use consultants to drive change.

Councillor Brookes noted that in 2008, some councillors saw Harlow's new Contact Centre, which was very impressive. It would be a great help here. Mr Chipp said that they had moved on from that now, it was also about channel shift and working with social media. Mr Bailey added that they were looking to do customer services work across the organisation, but this had to be done at a higher level across the whole council.

Councillor Mohindra asked if we should be improving the Council's switchboard. Mr Chipp said that we needed to get it all right, such as improving our website and making it more transactional not just improving telephone calls. Mr Hill (Assistant Director Governance and Performance Management) agreed, saying that was a good example as we needed to make it consistent for the customer.

Mr Bailey noted that attached to the report was a project list, which could be given by their work streams or by their risks.

Mr Maddock (Assistant Director Accountancy) explained the budget for the Transformation Programme noting that the programme had an initial budget of £100,000 from the District Development Fund. It was now funded from two funds, the Housing Revenue Account and the General Fund; the General Fund was split into three, the Continuing Services Budget, the District Development Fund (for one off projects) and the Invest to Save Fund, to deliver future savings. All four funds funded the Transformation Programme in some form.

Councillor Kane noted that this would fund all the projects listed. But where did the funding for the Transformation Programme come from in its management role. Mr Maddock said that costs came from Management Board through the CSB and the DDF. Councillor Mohindra asked how this could be tracked and how much was spent on this programme. Mr Maddock replied that this could be tracked from the CSB/DDF lists.

Mr Chipp commented that a lot of projects sat within the individual service plans and some have been on the books for some years. We wanted to put a time scale in and if they were worth doing, do it in one hit by funding it. Projects such as the 'one contact centre' once completed, would make saving for all four directorates. All projects would have a business case made for it and you would be able to track how it was going financially or otherwise. Other projects would usually report to the Select Committees on their progress.

Councillor Sartin asked if at the end of the programme could you quantify what was achieved to what was spent. Mr Chipp replied that they should be able to show a set of benefits and lower costs and efficiencies, along with delivering better services. The Corporate Plan would list the benefits we wanted.

Councillor Mohindra added that we had to change our culture to make us fit for purpose.

Councillor Kane said that this meeting should be looking to establish what we would be scrutinising to gauge a projects performance. We needed to evaluate progress made. Councillor Whitbread said that this would come from each business plan for each project. Mr Bailey said we often thought of success as a completed project but not ask if it was of benefit to our customers. That may come sometime later when we could measure if it was on cost and on time. Success could be measured at different points during and after the completion of the projects.

Councillor Whitbread said that we saved money on our printer strategy but this was not for our customers. They benefited from our Leisure Management project and our waste collection project. All were transformational.

Councillor Patel proposed that at the next meeting we look at one project and follow it through, looking at the drivers etc. through to completion. This was agreed by the members.

**AGREED:** at the next meeting we look at one project and follow it through, looking at the drivers etc. to completion.

The Chairman moved the meeting on to look at question 'f', "the cost of the management of the programme" and asked if we could allocate time and resources of officers to the programme. Mr Bailey said this would be possible through 'Covalent', to look at risks and benefits. Councillor Kane said this could be used for future scrutiny.

Mr Bailey went on to question 'g', noting that the Transformation Programme Board and Management Board considered new projects. A lot of these were detailed in Cabinet reports. A number of projects came up through Corporate Planning and Staff Suggestions, although these were usually smaller things (improvements), not usually classed as projects. They were trying to move away from being 'solution focused' and were trying to understand what the problem was that they were trying to solve. They needed to understand what the benefits they were trying to get to were. To look at the drivers and select the projects that got more impact for the Council.

Councillor Whitbread said that Members set the vision on what the council should be doing that the officers implemented. But where did Members engage on the Transformation Project? At the end of the day Members must have ownership of this.

Councillor Dorrell asked if the work done was followed up and how did they prioritise this throughout the year. Mr Chipp said that most projects were in existing business plans and the bigger projects were driven by Cabinet. The Corporate Plan being driven by Members and used to prioritise the projects. We will eventually come to a point where we will need to prioritise projects, but we were not at that stage as yet. Maybe the Task and Finish Panel could help with this.

Councillor Patel asked what the Leaders role was in the Transformation Programme. Councillor Whitbread replied that he took it through Cabinet. We have always had an aspiration to change and we are in a strong position as a Council and have carefully geared up the Transformation process and would be ready to take things forward and change things.

Councillor Surtees said that these were exciting times for change in the coming 5 years. How were learning points and experience tapped and learnt from. Mr Bailey answered that this was always ongoing once this Transformation Programme was finished there would be another one. In terms of learning, we now evaluate and measure projects when the project is closed. It would be taken to the Board and discussed and what was learnt from this would be shared. Also any lessons would be shared as the project went along.

Councillor Surtees said that engagement needed to be widened and not just have silo view but to a corporate view. Mr Chipp said that we were now at a stage where the programme needed to be implemented and not just talked about, such as the

accommodation change in the autumn when we would change desk ratios and move into one building.

Councillor Patel asked about multi-skilling the contact staff. Mr Bailey said that we had a workforce programme for wider skilling of the staff and for organising ourselves.

Councillor Mohindra added that we were leading in Essex. Everyone was looking at us as we were leading on this; and we were also relying on you as Councillors to help us.

Councillor Brookes asked if they would be providing voluntary redundancy for people who did not want to come with us. Mr Chipp said that yes, we would have some form of this. We needed to move with the times but it would be painful.

Councillor Patel moved the meeting on to consider question 'i', risk management. Mr Bailey said that the Corporate Risk Management Group was very receptive to this work. The more complex the changes were the more risk and so it was monitored throughout. We could look at this in more detail, perhaps through a live example.

**AGREED:** that the next meeting would look at risk management in detail, perhaps through a live example.

Councillor Patel asked if the risks across the programme were collectively assessed. Mr Bailey said that yes, individually and collectively assessed.

Councillor Dorrell asked how they coped with change within change. How did you deal with parameters that had been changed midway through? Mr Bailey said that this would be quite unusual. Mr Chipp said that this was the hazard of Central Government, which have used Local Government as a source of savings over the years and we have therefore had to match our projects to their whims. However 'Covalent' will be monitoring this and will enable us to plan for this.

Councillor Patel then moved on to consider question 'k' 'evaluation of specific outcomes of each project' Mr Bailey said that this was reported on monthly to the Transformation Programme Board and the bigger projects also went up to the Cabinet if required, with remedial actions outlined.

Councillor Patel asked how members were involved. Mr Bailey said on a project by project basis through meeting with the Cabinet.

Councillor Kane said that some projects were going on without going to scrutiny meetings. Mr Bailey said that this would be due to problems with time lines etc. but maybe something to explore in terms of scrutiny.

Councillor Patel asked how projects were evaluated. Mr Bailey replied through a Project Initiation Document (PID) or a business case and had to be agreed by the Transformation Board or the Cabinet.

The meeting went on to consider question 'n', "what factors determine under which Directorate project would sit". Mr Bailey said he could bring an example to a future meeting of a Risk Potential Assessment (RPA). It was a two stage process of assessment by 1) the project manager and 2) then reported on to the Board and assessed there. It then gets support and was monitored.

**AGREED:** to bring an example to a future meeting on the two stage process of a Risk Potential Assessment.

The meeting went on to consider question 'q', "how projects identified through the programme been allocated to a Directorate". Mr Bailey said that they had spoken about this. The Corporate Plan for 2018-2023 would go to scrutiny meetings. All the projects now had reference numbers that could be tracked through and were now also on Covalent.

The Chairman thanked Mr Bailey and Mr Chipp, saying he found it really useful. For the next stage they needed to consider what they wanted for the next meeting and to consider the 5 questions set out in the front of the agenda, which were:

1. How to best to scrutinise the management of the Transformation Programme;
2. How to best monitor and assess performance of the management of the Transformation Programme;
3. How to identify projects and sub programmes not within the remit of specific Select Committees;
4. How to measure and assess performance of identified projects and sub-programmes not within the remit of specific Select Committees; and
5. Suitable forums for future scrutiny of Transformation Programme.

#### **Q1: How to scrutinise the management of the Transformation Programme.**

The meeting gave the following suggestions:

- Councillor Baldwin would like to see specific examples of this.
- Councillor Surtees said it was important to have current examples and not of something that happened months ago.
- Councillor Patel suggested the 4 projects listed in Appendix 1 of the report that was assigned to the Office of the Chief Executive.
- Councillor Kane noted that many of these projects cut across the Council and could not be referred to any one Select Committee. So they could either go up to the main O&S Committee or a new Select Committee be set up to consider these projects. Maybe call it the Chief Executive SC.
- Councillor Surtees said that something needed to be put in place, like having a time limited scrutiny of these projects and also cover the overarching Transformation Programme.
- Councillor Whitbread suggested that overarching issues should go to the parent O&S Committee.
- Councillor Sartin said that O&S had the capacity to take this on but the portfolio holders would need to attend as well.
- Councillor Patel would also like to look at the costs of the projects and this could be considered at a future meeting.
- Councillor Kane noted that a lot of projects were in their early stages and we would need early input into them.
- Councillor Patel wondered if O&S was to look at the Transformation Programme as a whole or only the projects listed.
- Councillor Mohindra said that they could look at projects that have been completed such as the printer migration and how successful they were and lessons learnt.
- Mr Bailey said they could look at the measurement of performance as well as finance. We have success measures for our own projects. Risk Management falls under the Resources Select Committee.

- Councillor Patel asked if they needed to look at how the projects were first conceived and how they were made and to look at the business case and how they developed.

Councillor Dorrell asked if there could be demonstration of 'Covalent' at the next meeting.

**AGREED:** to have a demonstration of 'Covalent' at their next meeting.

**Q2: How to best monitor and assess performance of the management of the Transformation Programme.**

The meeting gave the following suggestions:

- Councillor Patel asked if they needed to look at the functions of Cabinet in this process.
- Mr Bailey said that this could be looked at in a future meeting.
- Councillor Surtees asked if they should listen to anything Human Resources wanted to say about the programme. We tended to say how much we value staff but how much of this got through to them. Could we give them a pat on the back when something went well?
- Mr Chipp responded that HR were keenly involved in this project and were on board.

Noted that Questions 3, 4 and 5 had already been discussed.

**RESOLVED:**

That at a future meeting the following items would be considered:

- a) At the next meeting we look at one project and follow it through, looking at the drivers etc. to completion;
- b) That the next meeting would look at risk management in detail, perhaps through a live example;
- c) To bring an example to a future meeting on the two stage process of a Risk Potential Assessment; and
- d) To have a demonstration of 'Covalent' at their next meeting.

**5. DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

The meeting considered the dates for a future meeting and decided that the most appropriate date would be 1 August 2017.

**RESOLVED:**

That the next meeting of this Task and Finish Panel be held on Tuesday 1<sup>st</sup> August 2017.

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