

ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL

COMMITTEE	Strategic Transformation Committee
DATE	14 November 2017
REPORT TITLE	Business Support Redesign
LEAD OFFICER	Angela Scott
REPORT AUTHOR	Ronnie McKean
REPORT NUMBER	CG/17/141

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT:-

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to advise the Committee of progress with the consolidation and redesign of the business support function.

2. RECOMMENDATION(S)

- 2.1 It is recommended that the Committee:
- a) note the decision of the Corporate Management Team to proceed with consolidation of the business support function and that this decision predates the transformation governance structures;
 - b) note that the implementation of the consolidation of the business support function is underway and being monitored by the Resources Delivery Board in the transformation governance structures;
 - c) note the operating model for the centralised function as set out in Appendix 1 and 2; and
 - d) note that savings in the region of £3m from the consolidation will be reflected through the 2018/2019 budget process.

BACKGROUND/MAIN ISSUES

- 3.1 Prior to the establishment of the Strategic Transformation Committee, and the breadth of the governance structures now in place, a review of the Council's business support functions was initiated by the Corporate Management Team via the "Operational Excellence Programme". Price Waterhouse Coopers (PwC) were engaged to support this review via a call off pre-tendered national framework in line with the Council's Standing Orders on "Contracting and Procurement".

At commencement of the project, the project team conducted staff engagement sessions and activities in order to produce data for analysis and review.

Analysis of the existing business support activities during Autumn 2016 in conjunction with PwC identified the following:

- Significant fragmentation of effort and no collaborative demand management
- High levels of manual processes and duplication within administration and frontline service teams
- A disproportionate amount of time and resource is being spent on business support activities.
- Work of a similar nature is carried out in all areas of the Council without consistency and coordination in order to meet the demands of the customer and business.
- Staff engaged in these activities are frustrated by lack of consistent systems, processes and development opportunities
- High dependency on support staff to undertake low level tasks that could either be avoided altogether (e.g. document printing when staff have lap tops) or have staff self-serving.

3.2 The Council at their meeting of 22nd February, 2017, agreed the Strategic Business Plan Refresh 2017-18 which gave details of the activity analysis conducted in conjunction with PwC and stated that the Council would seek to consolidate, simplify and standardise administrative and business support functions across the organisation.

3.3 The Corporate Management Team considered the output and analysis of that engagement on 29th June 2017. The decision was taken by the Corporate Management Team to proceed with the next phase of the project.

3.4 Following approval to proceed, the appointed project team conducted further engagement meetings with senior managers from the service areas which are within the project's scope. The "in-scope" list has been finalised, allowing the Project Team to determine the functions and the FTE available to form the centralised function. The proposed the operating model for the centralised function as set out in Appendix 1 and 2.

Strategic Fit

3.5 The consolidation of the business support function will deliver centralisation of the management and delivery of business support across the Council and will provide a professional, customer centric service that is resilient to shifting demands.

- 3.6 The proposed operating model will enable consistent service delivery and improved delivery of administrative support whilst enabling services to focus on core service delivery by removing administrative effort from front line staff.
- 3.7 The redesign focuses on efficiency which will reduce the number of roles currently undertaking business support activities across the council which will contribute to the required costs reductions required over the next five years.
- 3.8 The key design principles for the proposed model are as follows:

Organisational Design:

- Customer Centric – centralisation of the business support function will create functional teams performing similar tasks as a whole rather than service specific areas.
- Accountable and Transparent – management of the centralised business support function will result in measured service delivery supported by key performance indicators.
- Adaptive – the business support service will be agile allowing for resources to be reallocated in order to achieve demand requirements.
- Intelligence Led – the support service will utilise demand management information in order to deliver support when required.

Governance Principles:

- Informed – supporting processes will assess impact, assessment of risk, stakeholder views and requirements. Processes will be reviewed regularly against performance in order to deliver process improvement.

Workforce Principles:

- Flexible and Agile - Development of training needs analysis and training plans for staff together with robust performance management at both service and individual levels will deliver a professional team that is adaptive, flexible and future focused.
- Empowered and Accountable – the management structure of the service supports a model that empowers staff within the functional teams.
- Open and Co-Operative – the lean management structure encourages staff engagement allowing for staff to continually develop and improve.

Process Design Principles:

- Understand what people need – processes will be developed and reviewed in conjunction with stakeholders to ensure that processes are fit for purpose and meet stakeholder needs
- Make things open: it makes things better – performance indicators shall be shared with stakeholders in order to correct errors and improve performance.

Technology Principles:

- Flexible and Agile – the teams will be flexible and will seek opportunities to provide process improvements and efficiencies delivered through new technology.

Partners and Alliances Principles:

- Clarity on Roles and Responsibilities – the support function work with stakeholders in order to clarify and establish collaborative working relationships
- Commitment to Join Learning – the support function will recognise the need for knowledge sharing with stakeholders through learning and communication

3.9 This report updates the committee on progress to date with this project. The project is now within the overall Transformation Portfolio and, as such, will be captured within the Governance arrangement of the Transformation portfolio and progress on implementation will be reported to future meetings.

4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

4.1 There are no additional Finance requirements or implications at this time. It is anticipated that savings in the region of £3m from the consolidation will be reflected through the 2018/2019 budget process.

5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

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

6. MANAGEMENT OF RISK

6.1 At present, the immediate Financial Risk identified is the loss of potential savings within the 2018/19 Financial Year resulting from delays in implementation.

6.3 At this time, there are no direct risks to the following categories resulting from the service redesign however, these will be fully detailed within the next report to Strategic Transformation Committee.

- Employee
- Customer/citizen
- Environmental
- Technological
- Legal
- Reputational

7. IMPACT SECTION

7.1 An assessment of strategic alignment is included within this report and will be further refined during development phase of the project.

- Economy - Implementation of the redesigned Business Support function has potential cost savings which will support the council in achieving a balanced budget within the 2018/19 Financial Year.
- People - Implementation of the redesigned Business Support function will support the delivery of Front Line Services by removing administrative effort in these areas.
- Place - The Redesign of Business Support does not have any direct impact on the Place.
- Technology -Technology improvement opportunities will be identified as the programme progresses.

8. BACKGROUND PAPERS

None

9. APPENDICES

Appendix (1) – Organisation Structure

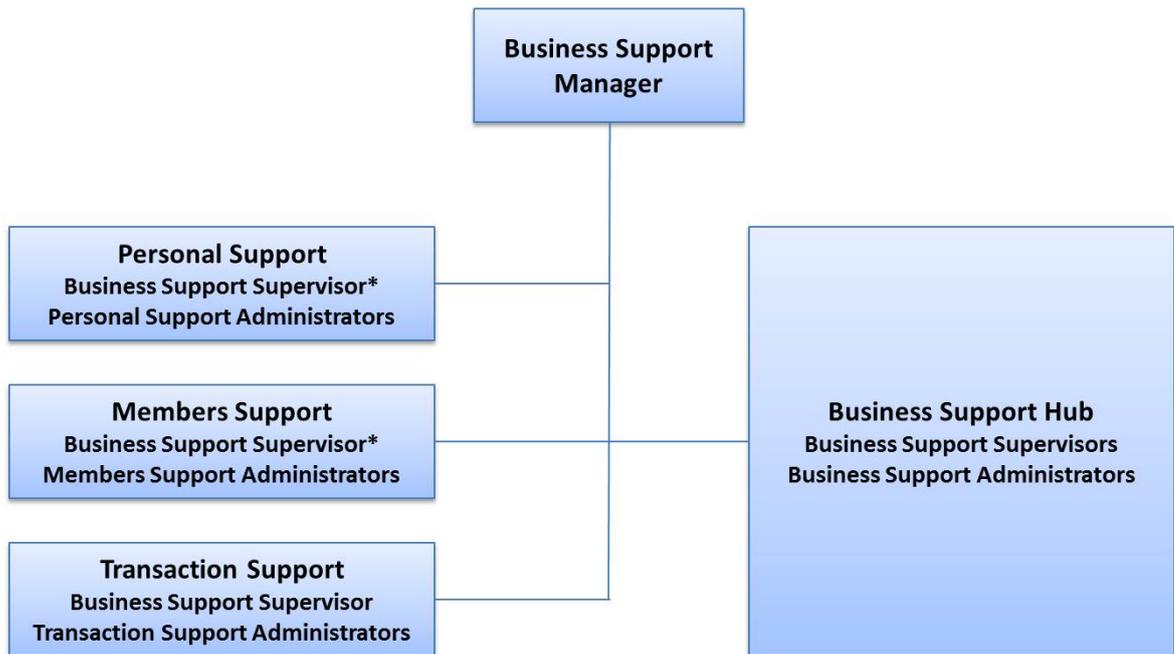
Appendix (2) – Activities of the Functional Support Teams

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Appendix (1)

The recommended operating model for the centralised function is as follows:



* *Shared Business Support Supervisor*

Appendix (2)

Activities of Functional Support Teams

Personal Support	Provision of personal secretarial and administrative support to senior officers of the Council
<p>Services will be defined in a service catalogue and will include:</p> <p>Chief Executive and Directors</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• diary management• email and correspondence management• call handling• meeting support• preparation of briefing papers, reports and presentations• travel booking and preparation of itineraries• simple research and project support <p>Heads of Service</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• diary management• meeting support• preparation of briefing papers, reports and presentations• travel booking and preparation of itineraries• simple research and project support	

Members Support	Provision of personal secretarial and administrative support to the Council's Elected Members
<p>Services will be defined in a service catalogue and will include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• diary management• email and correspondence management• call handling• meeting support• preparation of briefing papers, reports and presentations• travel booking and preparation of itineraries• simple research and project support <p><i>Support ratios to be defined</i></p>	

Transaction Support

Provision of administrative support for tasks associated with billing and financial transactions

Services will be defined in a service catalogue and will include:

- Manage daily payment process, including transmission of payment files to BACS and data input to systems
- Run cheques, foreign payments and remittance process
- Process payment of invoices
- Raise and issue of debtor invoices
- Run debtor reports and issue debtor letters
- Process and reconciliation of journals, accounts, statements, returns and purchase cards
- Payment error investigation and correction
- Raise purchase orders for goods and services via PECOS
- Administer Members allowances and expenses in line with statutory requirements
- Prepare and administer grant applications and claims
- Ensure arrestment against Council suppliers are properly actioned

Business Support Hub

Provision of general and service-specific administrative support

Services will be defined in a service catalogue and will include:

- Recording & Data Entry
- Statutory Minute Taking
- Scanning, Copying, Printing, Laminating
- Travel Booking – outwith UK
- Electronic file management
- Word processing
- DSE workstation assessments
- Co-ordination of committee reporting process
- Co-ordinate the programme of Workplace Inspections
- Ensure Directorate Dashboards are updated regularly to incorporate relevant Health and Safety data, prepare quarterly reports on Workplace Inspections, Accidents/Near Misses and Fire Risk Assessments to SMT, review and update Directorate Health and Safety Matrix
- Specialist: Recording of Child Protection Case Conferences and Looked After Child Reviews