



## **Future Council Programme**

Organisational Improvement  
Action Plan - Highlight Report

April 2015

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# INTRODUCTION

This is the first monthly report on progress that the council is making against the Organisational Improvement Action Plan, which was created in response to the recommendations made by the Kerslake Review. The Action Plan is externally monitored by the Birmingham Independent Improvement Panel.

The Action Plan is part of the council's Future Council Programme. This is the means by which we will deliver a changed council role and relationship with the city, our citizens and our partners, and redefine how we deliver services to best meet the needs of our communities in line with our medium term financial strategy.

This highlight report is structured around the themes of the Action Plan. It picks out the main areas of progress that the council has made and will be shared with the Panel to inform their reporting.

# IMPACT: HOW DO WE KNOW IF IT IS MAKING A DIFFERENCE?

The Action Plan set out our vision for the way that the Council would operate in the future through implementing these changes. We are developing measures to assess the impact, but much of the evidence will be qualitative and based on feedback from our citizens, partners, Members and staff.

The Action Plan was signed off by the Panel in late March. We have made progress in terms of actions. Understanding the difference they make and whether sustainable change has been achieved will be determined through :

- The Panel’s view of our progress
- Measures in the programme: outputs and outcomes

Vision – as set out in the Organisational Improvement Action Plan

Leadership and Strategy - Vision	Financial and Performance Management - Vision
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. We have clarity of purpose as an organisation: one vision, one set of priorities and one plan, and we know the part we each play in delivering those</li> <li>2. We have transparency in prioritisation, planning, and decision making</li> <li>3. Our decisions are based on robust data analysis and options appraisal</li> <li>4. Solutions are sought through cross-party dialogue</li> <li>5. There is a clear distinction between member and officer roles and responsibilities that is understood and observed in practice</li> <li>6. We feel comfortable having “difficult conversations” and know the forum for them</li> <li>7. The role of support services is clearly enabling and supporting service delivery</li> <li>8. Things get done: our conversation at meetings focuses on outcomes, implementation, progress and solutions - not excuses why we haven’t</li> <li>9. We have time to think, to lead, to invent, and to innovate</li> <li>10. We are willing try things out: we accept the risk of “positive failure” and learn from experimentation – and our people feel safe to do this</li> <li>11. We are true to our values</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. There is clear alignment between our outcomes-driven council plan and the human and financial resources available</li> <li>2. We have clear priorities owned by our staff and reflected in our plans</li> <li>3. We have meaningful medium term planning</li> <li>4. Our performance measures match our priorities and what we are trying to achieve</li> <li>5. The senior team has a clear line of sight on performance – are we delivering against our priorities</li> <li>6. We understand the reasons for under-performance and we intervene in a timely and appropriate manner to get back on track</li> <li>7. Accountability is clear and understood with consequences - for delivery and non-delivery – reflected in our performance management framework</li> <li>8. With accountability comes clear and real authority to make it happen</li> <li>9. We have open and honest conversations about performance that are constructive and focused on solutions (not the person)</li> </ol>
Size and Structure - Vision	Communities and partnerships - Vision
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. We have continuity and stability in our plans and policies at a city level because elections happen every four years</li> <li>2. We have a logical alignment and ratio of councillors to residents</li> <li>3. Councillors and officers have a closer relationship with communities and are seen as community leaders, facilitators, and developers/partnership makers</li> <li>4. There is a greater sense of place with local councillors scrutinising impact of services on the ground in their areas</li> <li>5. Our regional authority enables us to take on larger, more strategic development projects, access additional funds, and gives partners a more consistent experience in engaging with us</li> <li>6. The region has a greater voice and national profile and can lobby on behalf of the region to support local prosperity and economic development</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Our default position is to ask how we engage our partners and communities</li> <li>2. We behave as magnanimous, sometimes humble, leaders, driven by what is best for the city</li> <li>3. We have a shared ambition and vision for our city with our partners</li> <li>4. We are fully supportive of developments that benefit the city even if we are not involved or leading</li> <li>5. We create the conditions for others to progress ideas and developments that benefit our communities and the city</li> <li>6. We play our part – and sometimes that means getting out the way of others</li> <li>7. Our partners and communities see us as approachable and easy to engage with</li> <li>8. Our concept of partnership goes beyond the traditional concept of public sector agencies and we engage with anyone for the benefit of the city</li> </ol>

## How are we progressing against the Organisational Improvement Action Plan?

ACTION PLAN 1	LEADERSHIP AND STRATEGY	Lead/Snr Owner	
	ROLES, RESPONSIBILITIES AND CULTURE	Lead/s	Director Delivery

Q'ly milestones	Q4: January – March 15	Q1: April – June 15	Q2: July – September 15	Q3: October – December 15	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Member roles in HR clarified and changes implemented</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Launch performance review process &amp; member development</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Cultural change programme implemented</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>New support service model operational?</li> </ul>	
	Completed	On track			

ACTION	HIGHLIGHTS ON PROGRESS	NEXT STEPS	WHEN	WHO	Confidence
<b>Roles &amp; Responsibilities</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Appointed experienced Head of OD to lead this work and provide external challenge and expertise</li> <li>Initiated Chief Executive led communications plan for staff on changing roles and expectations</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Initiate Member Development programme post election, including induction.</li> <li>Launch programme of member: officer workshops on roles and responsibilities</li> </ul>	Q1	Director Delivery	Med
<b>Shared Expectations: capacity, capability and performance</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Work on the new staff performance review process in progress and on track to launch in April</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Clear articulation of the role and expectations of managers and leaders</li> <li>Launch of the new performance review process including 360 reviews for senior managers</li> </ul>	Q1	HR	High
<b>Support Services and Leadership Capacity</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>High level design for support services developed and identification of top 10 processes for fast track improvement</li> <li>Director Delivery in place for support services and business change, Deputy CE now responsible for economy including the Joint Economic Unit, and Director of Programme Delivery appointed by the LEP.</li> <li>Development and appraisal of options for increasing strategic leadership capacity is underway</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Detailed design of support services model and initiate implementation</li> <li>Agreement on strategic leadership capacity option for implementation.</li> <li>Sourcing a senior regional lead for skills</li> </ul>	Q1	CExec	Med
<b>Culture</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Outline design of culture change programme underway, including</li> <li>Values signed off and shared with staff</li> <li>Expected behaviours drafted and ready for launch in line with the new performance review process in April</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Sign off outline plan for year one cultural programmes, aligned to work on member development, and begin implementation</li> </ul>	Q1	CExec	Low

## How are we progressing against the Organisational Improvement Action Plan?

ACTION PLAN 2	LEADERSHIP & STRATEGY	Snr Lead/ Owner	
	STRATEGIC PLANNING	Lead/s	Director of Finance, Head of Strategy, Director Delivery

Q'ly Milestones	Q4: January – March 15	Q1: April – June 15	Q2 July – September 15	Q3: October – December 15
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Design of council transformation programme</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Vision, purpose and design principles</li> <li>Draft planning framework</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Implementation of long term planning approach and planning framework</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Options for future models</li> </ul>
	Completed	On track		

Theme	HIGHLIGHTS ON PROGRESS	NEXT STEPS	WHEN	WHO	Confidence
<b>Strategic and Financial Planning</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Draft approach developed for implementing long term financial and service planning that delivers both the future council operating model of 2020/21 and the medium term financial strategy.</li> <li>Agreed approach for developing the vision, purpose, design principles and to shape the long term plans and future operating model.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Developing the detailed methodology for long term planning and development of the future operating model and service delivery models</li> <li>Event with key partners on planning assumptions to identify opportunities for greater alignment in planning and integrating services around customers.</li> <li>Refine and sign off the council's vision, purpose, and design principles.</li> </ul>	Q1	Director Finance C Exec Director Delivery	Med
<b>Planning and Performance Framework</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Light touch review of the current performance framework is underway</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Developing the corporate planning framework aligned to the approach for long term financial and service planning</li> </ul>	Q1	Head of Strategy	Med
<b>Future Operations</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The whole council transformation programme - Future Council – has been designed with engagement of senior officers and members. The programme is the vehicle for delivering the Improvement Action Plan and ultimately a sustainable operating model for the council.</li> <li>High level milestone plans developed for each of the sub programmes</li> <li>Internal recruitment process designed and underway to identify capacity and capability within the organisation to deliver the future council programme</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Completion of internal recruitment process and deployment of resources</li> <li>Progress the next stage of developing the programme:                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Detailed action planning</li> <li>Detailed resource plan</li> </ul> </li> <li>Implement programme governance to monitor progress and performance</li> </ul>	Q1	Director Delivery	Med

## How are we progressing against the Organisational Improvement Action Plan?

ACTION PLAN 3	LEADERSHIP AND STRATEGY	Lead/Snr Owner	Director Delivery
	HR AND WORKFORCE PLANNING	Lead/s	Director Delivery, Director Legal

Q'ly Milestones	Q4: January – March 15	Q1: April – June 15	Q2 July – September 15	Q3: October – December 15
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Address immediate issues in children's safeguarding</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Organisational recruitment and retention issues identified</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review whistleblowing and new HR arrangements</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Draft strategic workforce plan developed</li> </ul>
	Completed	On track		

ACTION	HIGHLIGHTS ON PROGRESS	NEXT STEPS	WHEN	WHO	Confidence
<b>Member roles in HR and strategic workforce planning</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>New HR Governance agreed at full Council and implemented: E&amp;HR Committee decommissioned, Deputy Leader has responsibility for strategic HR matters, and the Council Business Management Committee has responsibility for non-Executive HR decisions</li> <li>Trade unions are engaged in the implementation of new processes whereby members are only involved in final dismissal hearings.</li> <li>Extended Head of Paid Service responsibility for recruitment and officer matters, which recalibrates the member/officer HR governance balance.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review of HR policies to ensure alignment with new arrangements</li> <li>Design of monitoring to assess effectiveness and compliance with new arrangements</li> </ul>	Q1	Director Delivery	Med
<b>Senior Leadership for HR, people change and workforce planning</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Director Delivery and two senior leads for Organisational Development and HR in place to provide senior capacity, capability and leadership</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Agree permanent roles for senior leadership on HR, people change and workforce planning as part of the leadership review and support services redesign</li> </ul>	Q1	Director Delivery	Med
<b>Recruitment and Retention Issues</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Workforce plan for children's safeguarding, including recruitment and retention created.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Create organisational development strategy for children's safeguarding to deliver cultural and workforce change</li> <li>Assessment of recruitment and retention issues across the wider organisation</li> </ul>	Q1	Director Delivery	Med
<b>Whistleblowing</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Cross council whistleblowing is in place</li> <li>Monitoring is in place but under review – proposing six monthly reporting to Deputy Leader and three monthly to CEx/Chief Officers</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Evaluation in September 2015</li> </ul>	Q2	Director Legal	High 7

## How are we progressing against the Organisational Improvement Action Plan?

ACTION PLAN 4		SIZE AND STRUCTURE		Lead/Snr Owner	
		DEVOLUTION, ADMINISTRATION AND LOCAL DELIVERY		Lead/s	Head of Electoral Services, Director Localism, CExec
Q'ly milestones	Q4: January – March 15		Q1: April – June 15	Q2: July – September 15	Q3: October – December 15
	Community Governance Review consultation completed		Submission of initial report on Council size to Boundary Commission	Future purpose and remit of District Committees	New administrative arrangements (below city level)
	Completed		On track		

ACTION	HIGHLIGHTS ON PROGRESS	NEXT STEPS	WHEN	WHO	Confidence
<b>Electoral Cycle and Boundary Commission</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>An officer project team and Member working group are in place. Work is underway to gather evidence for the submission of an initial report on Council size to the Boundary Commission by 22<sup>nd</sup> May (in line with the agreed process and timetable for the review).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Submission of the report on 22<sup>nd</sup> May to the Boundary Commission</li> <li>The Boundary Commission will be holding awareness-raising sessions in early June. Their consultation period will run from 23<sup>rd</sup> June – 31<sup>st</sup> August.</li> </ul>	Q1 Q2	Head of Electoral Services	High
<b>Devolution</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>“Community Governance in Birmingham: The Next Decade” consultation has taken place in February and March. Evidence from these sessions has been collated and examined, and a report produced.</li> <li>Proposals for city scrutiny have been developed and are being consulted on through the Member Working Group (Overview and Scrutiny)</li> <li>Relevant amendments to the Council’s constitution relating to community governance at District and Ward level are being drafted and are being considered by the Member Working Group (Governance).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Member Working Group (Governance) will be considering the draft final report from the Community Governance Review, which will inform the development of future proposals.</li> <li>A separate and more detailed paper on future governance issues will be produced in May</li> <li>Any changes to the constitution will be formally considered at the Council AGM on 19<sup>th</sup> May</li> <li>Training &amp; Development package for Members (Ward, District, O&amp;S) will be developed to reflect the changes to community governance</li> </ul>	Q1 Q2	Director, Localism	Med
<b>Locality Delivery Models</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Agreement to explore benefits of locality delivery models through the development of Council operating model and long term planning approach</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The service delivery element of this work will be progressed via the Strategic Planning work stream.</li> <li>Role of members in identifying local service needs to be progressed via next stage of Community Governance Review</li> </ul>	Q1/Q2	Director Localism	N/A
<b>Combined Authority Governance review</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Programme Management set up in Wolverhampton City Council with dedicated senior leadership. DCLG support is also in place. BCC leads for all work streams have been identified</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Consultancy support will be put into place</li> <li>Programme plan indicates that the Governance Review will be completed by mid-July. Detailed plans will be produced following the review and before implementation</li> </ul>	Q1 Q1/2	CExec	High 8



## How are we progressing against the Organisational Improvement Action Plan?

ACTION PLAN 5	COMMUNITIES AND PARTNERSHIP	Lead/Snr Owner	
	COMMUNITIES AND PARTNERSHIP	Lead/s	AD Employment, Snr Policy Officer to CExec

Q'ly milestones	Q4: January – March 15	Q1: April – June 15	Q2: July – September 15	Q3: October – December 15
	Creation of vehicle for delivery of employment and skills in East Birmingham (in conjunction with DCLG)	City Partnership steering group formed	City Partnership Group launched	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Assess impact of Skills and Employment Board</li> <li>City Vision and Draft Plan (City Partnership Group)</li> </ul>
	Completed	In progress		

ACTION	HIGHLIGHTS	NEXT STEPS	WHEN	WHO	Confidence
Skills and Employment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>East Birmingham Employment &amp; Skills Board created and operational team established.</li> <li>Statistical analysis of East Birmingham produced by BCC which has been used to tailor the focus of the programme</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Mapping of existing provision underway for identified target areas to inform development of local delivery plans by end April 2015</li> <li>Evaluation of performance of previous national programmes being led by Cabinet Office (DCLG)</li> </ul>	Q1	AD Employment	Med
“City Partnership Group”	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Informal event held 4<sup>th</sup> February with a group of partners. Whole-organisation database of partnerships created. Initial discussions underway with external key players to establish steering group for formal launch event over the summer</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Agree steering-group membership and approach to launching the Group</li> <li>Continue to revise and develop database of partners</li> <li>Continue to look at extant networks and links, and engage with partners on processes already underway to ensure a joined up approach</li> </ul>	Q1	Snr Policy Officer to CExec	Med
City Vision	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Internal workshop to develop working vision and ambition statements for the city</li> <li>Externally facilitated event with partners April 21<sup>st</sup> to consider points of convergence / divergence between council vision and partner visions</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Resourcing arrangements for this sub-programme to be agreed, enabling faster progress to be made.</li> </ul>	Q1	Snr Policy Officer to CExec	Low
Partnership Approach	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Progress has been made on City Partnership Group and with City Vision – however, until this sub-programme is adequately resourced, progress on a wider partnership approach will be limited.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Resourcing arrangements for this sub-programme to be agreed, enabling faster progress to be made.</li> <li>In the meantime we will continue to capitalise on proven existing strong partnership links and connections</li> </ul>	Q1	Snr Policy Officer to CExec	Low

## RISKS AND MITIGATION

Risk	Mitigating Action
Resistance to change – cultural and behavioural – across the officer and political spectrum	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Focus on cultural and behavioural change through Forward the Birmingham Way, including use of behavioural insight</li> <li>• Engagement and communications - informing and preparing people for change, encouraging their input and ownership, creating culture of transparency and openness through behaviour and open access to programme information</li> <li>• Use of external expertise to challenge</li> </ul>
Insufficient capacity and capability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Robust recruitment process designed to select appropriately skilled internal resource.</li> <li>• Use external resource in a targeted way, e.g. for key skills gaps and to build internal capability</li> <li>• Develop of options for increasing strategic leadership capacity</li> </ul>
Balancing programme delivery with ongoing business operation and short term momentum with long term change	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clear framing of change as a five year programme and planning implementation over this period</li> <li>• Staff seconded to the programme full time to provide focused capacity for change activities</li> <li>• High level of engagement with key stakeholders and management forums across the organisation to facilitate joint prioritisation and avoid a disconnect between the ongoing business and the programme</li> <li>• Map, review and challenge existing plans, projects and initiatives to ensure alignment to priorities</li> </ul>
Complexity of the programme – potential risk of failed dependencies, double counting of benefits, unforeseen impacts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Benefit and dependency management will form part of the programme management approach to identify and manage interdependencies</li> <li>• Formal governance structure in place to provide clear pathway and forums for decision making</li> <li>• Transparency and accessible information to help all to recognise and manage connections</li> </ul>
Existing plans, budget commitments, and projects are not aligned to the programme – potentially duplicating effort and diverting key resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Map, review and challenge existing plans, projects and initiatives to ensure alignment with strategic direction, priorities and the programme. Agreement to close down or re-scope projects that do not fit.</li> <li>• Governance process to take account of previous decisions from the service review process and the impact of changes proposed by the programme</li> </ul>
Balancing organisational, technology and process changes, e.g. underestimating role of technology	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pathway to be put in place to manage change in a structured, holistic way, across people, processes, organisations, and technology.</li> </ul>
Uncertainty around our partners' future plans at a regional and city level	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Partner event 21 April to initiate dialogue and share plans</li> <li>• Ongoing engagement with partners to facilitate joint planning around customers and outcomes, including engagement in long term planning process during summer 2015</li> </ul>

**Future Council Programme**

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