

The Highland Council

**Resources Committee
27 August 2014**

Agenda Item	17
Report No	RES/4 5/14

Corporate Improvement Programme

Report by Depute Chief Executive/Director Corporate Development

Summary

The Corporate Improvement Programme (CIP) is progressing with a target to achieve £5.98m in efficiency savings for the period 2013/14 & 2014/15. In addition, the process for aligning the next programme of work with the corporate budget setting process is underway and in the last period an independent review of the Programme has taken place. The last quarter has seen the launch of the new web site and HR admin processes.

1. Introduction

1.1 This report provides an update on the progress of the CIP. The programme is managed as a set of interrelated projects by Project Managers from the Corporate Improvement Team working with Project Managers from Development and Infrastructure and Finance. In turn, they report to the Programme Board which is chaired by the Chief Executive and includes all members of the Executive Leadership Team (ELT), with sponsorship of individual projects being the responsibility of members of the Executive Leadership Team.

2. Progress Monitoring

2.1 The major focus of the CIP is the delivery of cashable efficiencies and development of a Target Operating Model which will introduce improved ways of working across the Council, including:

- Effectively reducing the effort involved in serving customers, managing information and transactional activity in the back office;
- Securing contracts at less cost and increasing income;
- Modernising the Council and how we interact with customers;
- Reducing the amount of owned/leased buildings and the cost of maintaining the remainder.

3. Current Programme Status

3.1 The overall programme remains on target and further details for the individual projects are shown at 3.2. These were agreed at the beginning of the programme and are monitored monthly. The project status table at 3.3 shows the projects and for each of these the progress against plan and the progress against savings. The next year requires the programme to attain a total of £5.98m savings cumulative over the two years. Progress against the targets will be reported to Resources Committee each quarter.

3.2		13/14	14/15	Total £m
	Agreed Budget Targets	£3.00 m	£2.981 m	£5.98 m

3.3	Project	Deliverable RAG Status	Savings RAG Status
	Asset Management	Green	Green
	Business Support	Amber	Amber
	Customer Contact Transformation	Amber	Amber
	Income Generation	Green	Amber
	Integrated Transport Provision	Green	Green
	Mobile & Flexible Working	Green	Green
	Managing Information	Green	Green
	Procurement	Amber	Green

A brief synopsis of progress of each project is included in sections below.

4. **Asset Management**

4.1 Dingwall Office Rationalisation

The project is working with staff to reduce the Council's office estate from 9 to 5 properties in Dingwall. The Project Team continues to work closely with nominated Managers and Service Line Managers to incorporate flexible working practices into the redesigned office accommodation. This includes identifying opportunities to improve the way information is managed, to reduce paper files and to ensure information and records are managed in line with Highland Council policy and good practice.

4.2 Fort William

The recommendations of the review of the Council's offices in the centre of Fort William were considered at the Finance, Housing and Resources Committee on 27 November 2013.

4.3 Members agreed the preferred option which will result in the co-location of the Council's main administrative offices, democratic services, Service Point and Registration Offices to a regenerated conversion of the Council-owned, listed former Fort William Secondary School site on Achintore Road.

4.4 The next phase will see the development of detailed proposals required to achieve the preferred option with local Members and staff. The Council has finalised the lease extensions at Lochaber House and Fulton House which are required until the preferred option is delivered.

4.5 It is intended to report the outcomes from the feasibility study into the conversion of Tweeddale into residential accommodation and commercial negotiations with the landlord to purchase Tweeddale, and the investigation into an alternative use for the Council's existing leased space in Tweeddale to The Highland Council at its meeting on 4 September 2014.

5. Business Support

5.1 The overall status of the Business Support Project Plan is Amber to reflect the delays to the School Support Work. A new service delivery model for school support is being proposed, with the intention of undertaking a trial of the new model from September 2014.

5.2 Personnel Administration/ResourceLink

The Personnel Admin Project Phase 1 (Establishment, Recruitment and Contract Management) successfully went live on 1 July 2014 and in the first 6 weeks of live running, over 1200 forms have been submitted and processed, with positive feedback received on far more efficient, controlled and user-friendly processes. The new processes and use of existing technology (ResourceLink and SharePoint) are reducing the effort in Business Support.

5.3 Phase 2 (ResourceLink Self Service), enables members of staff to update and access their own information and approve requests (e.g. online expenses), reducing effort in Business Support. Phase 2 development is continuing, including engagement with other organisations using the same system to learn from their approach (e.g. online expenses and access for staff without Council ICT log ins).

5.4 Self Service processes include :

- Online expenses
- Online pay slips
- Recording absence
- Annual leave
- Managers Team View (including viewing absence)
- Non-Authorised Self Service (including change personal details)
- Health and Safety (recording incidents)

5.5 A Project Plan for Phase 2 is being produced and will be put to the August 2014 Business Support Project Board for their consideration. Implementation of Phase 2 starts on 1 November 2014 and is intended to conclude February 2015 as a target

5.6 School Support

The Project is designed to improve processes and make best use of resources in delivering school business support. A report is to be submitted to the 28 August 2014 Education, Children and Adult Services Committee, recommending a trial of the proposed Service Delivery Model for the school support function, aligning with the Associated School Group (ASG) model across the region.

6. Customer Contact Transformation

6.1 Project Status

The status of the project is currently Amber due to issues with the implementation of new software for online forms and integration. These issues are now largely resolved and the project board has approved a revised

plan to bring the project back on track. It is expected that the project status will revert to Green in September.

6.2 Web

The new Highland Council website went live on 29 May 2014 and was officially launched on 31 July 2014. The site has been well received and over the period 1,905,913 unique visitors viewed the content. This is an increase of 542,524 on the previous equivalent period. This website is far more integrated with analytical tools than the previous site and some of the most popular tasks are payment online, reporting issues online and Council Tax enquiries. The next phase of work involves developing the channel shift strategy, encouraging appropriate customers to move to initiating service delivery online.

6.3 Process Redesign

The Project Team are currently working on two groups of processes; Finance and Entitlements and Housing processes. By redesigning these processes a better service can be provided to customers and a reduction of the effort involved can be achieved. The team are engaged in re-writing all current online forms using the new software solution and this will further increase the usefulness of the website.

6.4 The project is also engaged in development of the customer account portal in liaison with the Improvement Service – this together with online forms will provide an easy and secure access to services for customers. This development will be linked to the Scottish Government [mygovscot](#) website and [myaccount](#) login. The target date for delivery is 6th October 2014.

6.5 Integration

Installation of the integration software is now complete. Project staff are developing the means to link systems to remove manual double entry of data which will save effort and deliver further savings.

7. **Income Generation Project**

7.1 The status of the project is Amber due to shortfall against targets for advertising. Further opportunities are being developed to increase income including advertising on bus shelters, more lamppost banner positions as part of the Inverness flood works and advertising at the Glen Nevis Centre and on its website.

7.2 The Income Generation Project focus is on Advertising and Sponsorship through the partnership with Scottish Provincial Press (SPP) and identifying and developing new income opportunities.

7.3 An Income Generation workshop was held following Resources Committee on 28 May 2014 which was attended by Members from the Committee. The workshop generated a number of ideas which are being explored by the project to see if they are a viable means of generating additional income. These included sponsorship of floral displays and interpretation boards and establishment of pet cemeteries.

- 7.4 SPP are continuing with the selling of advertising space/sponsorship for employee payslips, roundabouts, and lamppost banners and on information screens within the larger Service Points. Rates for some of these opportunities are being reviewed in order to increase income where the market will allow. Income so far this year to the Council through the advertising and sponsorship partnership is £6.1k to end June 2014.
- 7.5 Other opportunities being progressed include advertising on new Inverness bus shelters and at the Glen Nevis Visitor Centre as well as on the Visitor Centre website.
- 7.6 Under the wind turbine business model the project is continuing with the identification of Council-owned sites suitable for turbines. Other renewable energy opportunities currently being developed are the installation of a gas-powered generator using waste methane gas on landfill sites.

8 Transport Programme

- 8.1 The Integrated Transport Provision Pilot Project which began its operations phase in June 2014 has been incorporated into a wider Transport Programme. The Transport Programme has been instigated not only to secure savings but to do so in a planned manner, understanding what is in place and what might sensibly replace that to reduce expenditure and improve service provision. A key aspect of the Transport Programme will be engaging with the transport and community sectors to aid the process of determining future provision within the budget limit.
- 8.2 The Transport Programme's overall savings target is £2.323m. Projects to be developed within the scope of the Programme are:
1. Local bus services
 2. Taxi contracts
 3. Home-to-school transport efficiencies Community transport funding
 4. Supporting community transport solutions Continuation of the integrated transport provision project, an action-learning project currently underway in Lochaber
 5. Exploring the potential for joint logistics operations with NHS Highland
- 8.3 To facilitate this programme of work, Highland Council has established a programme board involving Highlands and Islands Transport Partnership, Highland Third Sector Interface, Scottish Ambulance Service, NHS Highland, Community Transport Association and Voluntary Action Lochaber. This structure will ensure stronger partnership working across public and voluntary sectors and will better guide the development of appropriate service provision. The Council's Director of Community Services sponsors the Programme which will report into the Corporate Improvement Programme Board.

9. Managing Information

- 9.1 The Managing Information Project will make significant progress towards effectiveness and efficiency in the management of documents and records.

This will be achieved through the implementation of key areas of the Information Management Strategy.

9.2 The work undertaken by business teams in Wick and Dingwall has resulted in over 2140 linear metres of paper, equivalent to 703 full 4 Drawer Filing Cabinets, being removed from office space in scope of the Dingwall Office Rationalisation Project. In Wick this has meant that the Wellington Centre building is now on the market for offers over £150k.

9.3 Records Management

The Records Management policy framework, guidance and support materials are now fully in place and the new Corporate Retention Schedules have been reviewed and agreed. The Project Team is currently working with Records Management to set up satellite records stores in order to implement better controls around the management of records and reduce time spent on disposition and retrieval processes. A new records store has now been implemented in Wick and the team is currently working on setting up a satellite store in Dingwall. A review of Inverness stores is also on-going and will be followed by reviews of other satellite areas.

9.4 Document Management

The Project Team have undertaken action learning with various business units to develop an appropriate electronic document management tool to support better management of information. A team site template has been developed using SharePoint 2010 and will be rolled out to business units from October onwards. This rollout will include a full review of the team's information holdings and will be supported by the Project Team. An implementation plan is currently being developed and is subject to approval of the Information Management Governance Board.

9.5 Office Rationalisation Support

The Project Team is also working with staff in scope of the Dingwall Office Rationalisation Project to support teams to identify opportunities to improve the way their information is managed, to reduce paper holdings where appropriate and to ensure information and records are managed in line with Highland Council policies and best practice.

10. **Mobile & Flexible Working (MFW)**

10.1 One of the objectives of the Mobile and Flexible Working Project was to engage with each Service, explore the possibilities for more agile working and draw up a Mobile & Flexible Working, or Agile Working, Plan. In all plans there were some key themes:

- Service management teams to lead on behavioural change
- Implementation of a flexible workplace
- Exploitation of new technology (Office Communicator, telephone conferencing)
- Managers to complete online Agile Working training course
- Staff to complete training in the use of ICT (Office Communicator & BT

- MeetMe which has been completed by 50% of managers)
- Identification of opportunities for using ICT to reduce travel
- Reviewing of office space layout

Copies of the Service plans as they currently stand for the previous Service structure are available on the Mobile & Flexible Working One Stop Shop at <http://ntintra1/cx/cip/MFW/Pages/default.html>

- 10.2 The Project continues to work with the Dingwall Office Rationalisation Project when looking at layouts and desk allocation for the various teams based in the buildings. Meetings with managers from both the Area Education Office and Fodderty Way are currently ongoing to discuss and agree floor layouts and desk allocation in both County Buildings and Fodderty Way.
- 10.3 The Project has started again looking at the further deployment of mobile technology across the organisation. This will included drawing up an approach for getting the Services to adopt the technology and re-engagement with the Services to ascertain and quantify what roles will produce the required benefits and to what extent. A demonstration of the current Total Mobile system, an earlier version is currently used for responsive housing repairs, was carried out in July creating significant enthusiasm for mobile working

11. Procurement

- 11.1 The status of the project is Amber because of difficulties recruiting resources and difficulties accessing data. A Project Manager and Project Analyst have been recruited. Remedial actions are in place to try and address data.
- 11.2 Work is continuing on all aspects of the procurement improvement project, and a stage review was presented to the Executive Leadership Team in June. A response to the Audit Scotland review of Local Authority Procurement is in development, and preparations for this year's Procurement Capability Assessment are underway. Mapping of Highland businesses by industry sector is close to completion, as is analysis of tendering history: Both these pieces of work will help the Council to make more informed decisions in its approach to individual procurement strategies. The outcome will be better engagement with Highland businesses/SMEs and therefore a contribution to the Council's target of increasing the level of business awarded to them in accordance with the Programme for the Council.

12. Future Programme Developments

- 12.1 As part of the budget setting process through to 2019 the Corporate Improvement Team (CIT) has been engaged to research and develop a portfolio of potential projects alongside service initiatives that will both help deliver the required savings and improve and modernise the Council.
- 12.2 This portfolio of projects is being assessed in terms of deliverability, levels of savings required and impact. The projects that are taken forward need to be seen as part of the wider budget setting process that Members will be

involved in.

12.3 Whatever the opportunities to be developed it is assumed that the programme will have the following attributes:

- Be transformational and deliver step change but this is over a period of four years
- Be discussed and to be subject to challenge and discussion
- Be cross-service in nature
- Be aligned with the corporate aims and the desired end state
- Be concerned with efficiency and effectiveness
- Be part of a governed and a supported change
- Have a focus on the pace of delivery

13. Risks

13.1 As part of the governance arrangements, each project maintains a risk and issue log that is reviewed monthly to ensure that remedial or preventative action is being taken where the project may be affected. Similarly a programme risk and issue log is maintained for programme level governance. Maintaining these registers enables the prioritisation of risk based on severity and likelihood and putting in place the necessary mitigating actions. There are currently no red risks.

14. Resource Implications

14.1 There are no additional resource implications arising from this report with respect to the current programme, the future programme will be assessed for resource need at the detailed planning stage.

15. Legal Implications

15.1 There are no current or anticipated legal issues.

16. Rural Implications

16.1 There are no issues arising from this report which have a direct impact on rural communities. However it is expected that some projects e.g. Transport, Customer Contact Transformation will need to take into account the impact on rural communities.

17. Equalities and Climate Change

17.1 There are no implications for equalities or climate change as a result of this report with respect to the current programme. A new programme, including any proposals emerging from the Transport Programme, will be subject to an equality impact assessment.

18. Recommendation

18.1 Members are requested to:

- Note the progress with the delivery of the Corporate Improvement Programme
- Note the development of a new Programme in line with the developing 4 year Budget Strategy.

Designation: Depute Chief Executive Chief Executive

Date: 12 August 2014

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