

# SCRUTINY REPORT

**MEETING:** Overview and Scrutiny Committee

**DATE:** 9 October 2012

**SUBJECT:** Plan for Change update

**REPORT FROM:** Cllr John Smith, Cabinet Member for Corporate Affairs  
Cllr Jane Lewis, Cabinet Member for Leisure, Tourism and Culture  
Cllr Gill Campbell, Cabinet Member for Neighbourhoods and Regeneration

**CONTACT OFFICER:** Graham Atkinson, Executive Director for Environment and Development Services  
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## **1. Summary**

- 1.1 This report provides an update on the Plan for Change Reviews to date and allows the committee to have overview of the next steps in the process. The Committee will have an opportunity to comment on a range of proposals which have been developed prior to a decision by Cabinet and prior to a range of engagement and consultation activities with stakeholders and members of the public.

## **2. Matters for Consideration/Recommendation**

- 2.1 The Committee is asked to:
- Note the proposals being put forward and provide input and comments which can be incorporated into the final proposals prior to consultation and decision by Cabinet.
  - Given the range and scale of these reviews, consider the establishment of overview working groups for each review.

## **3. Background Information**

- 3.1 The Plan for Change, approved by Executive in June 2011, sets out the strategic direction for the Council to manage many of the financial challenges ahead as well as new statutory responsibilities, such as the Localism Act and integration of the public health function within the local authority.
- 3.2 The Plan for Change provides a starting point for us to consider the efficiency and effectiveness of what we do; to look at the needs of our changing customer

base; to consider the demand we face for services and ensure we manage the expectations of the customer in an environment where we have less resources.

- 3.3 Whilst the Plan for Change develops a strategy to address anticipated funding reductions for three years to March 2015, a number of risks remain due to external factors;
- The Plan for Change is based upon anticipated funding reductions extracted from the Comprehensive Spending Review using national control totals; the picture locally for Bury will not be confirmed until precise funding settlements are announced.
  - Local Government Finance is subject to considerable reforms, notably the proposed retention of Business Rates at a local level. The consultation for these proposals is currently ongoing (till late September). It is likely the final scheme (and impact for Bury) will not be confirmed until late 2012 / early 2013.
  - The general economic climate continues to be challenging, and the likelihood is that Public Sector spending restrictions will continue to 2016 and beyond. It is therefore critical that the Plan for Change identifies savings which are sustainable, and can be further developed in future years.
- 3.4 The Plan for Change is committed to ensuring an open and transparent process, actively seeking the views of the local community, listening to ideas, and where possible acting on these ideas. Since the Plan for Change was approved and in this time the Council has undertaken two consultation exercises.
- 3.5 In the Choices Consultation, results indicated that the most important priority was *supporting vulnerable people*, with a '*strong local economy*' and a '*decent place to live*' selected as choice two and three respectively. The results of the Choices Consultation helped inform the 3-year Programme of Savings, which sets out how the council intends to achieve £17.7m savings by 2015.
- 3.6 Within the Programme of Savings the Council outlined that some service areas would be subject to further review before savings were made. The review process is designed to help us understand 'why we do what we currently do' and how the organisation may need to change to ensure these service areas are fit for the future.
- 3.7 Within the Programme of Savings the Council outlined that some service areas would be subject to further review before savings were made. The review process is designed to help us understand 'why we do what we currently do' and how the organisation may need to change to ensure these service areas are fit for the future.
- 3.8 The review areas are Community Safety (CCTV), Environmental Services and Economic Development, Parks and Countryside, Highways, Leisure and Libraries. In addition Adult Learning will be reviewed to contribute to our internal efficiencies savings targets.
- 3.9 The reviews have various timescales in place with some, such as the Libraries Review, being a more complex process in order to ensure that all the legal requirements are complied with.

- 3.10 Review teams have been tasked to put forward a sustainable, long-term vision for the service area, which will make sure we continue to commission or deliver core services that demonstrate value for money in a challenging public sector financial climate and, if appropriate, also ensure we meet our statutory requirements.

#### **4.0 Leisure Services Review update**

- 4.1 Following the meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee in August a consultation exercise has been developed to help formulate and shape the long term vision and strategy for this area of work and also consult on the short term savings proposals relating to the crèche and café provision at Castle Leisure.
- 4.2 As part of the consultation exercise it is proposed that a series of focus groups is organised with service users and other stakeholders. Members are invited to be part of this process.
- 4.3 Progress on the above will be reported back to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee in December 2012.

#### **5.0 Parks and Countryside and Grounds Maintenance Review**

- 5.1 Following the meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee in August a consultation exercise has been developed to help formulate and shape the long term vision and strategy for this area of work and also consult on the short term savings proposals.
- 5.2 As part of the consultation exercise it is proposed that a series of focus groups are organised with service users and other stakeholders. Members are invited to be part of this process.
- 5.3 Progress on the above will be reported back to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee in December 2012.

#### **6.0 Environmental Services Review**

- 6.1 In the Choices Consultation '*A decent place to live*', which included environmental protection across the borough, was selected as Choice number 3 by respondents. This reflected the role the council has in trading standards, environmental health, licensing and environmental protection. In the Programme of Savings we said we would look at how we deliver Environmental Services across the Council. The review identified a savings target of £242,000 by 2015.
- 6.2 Some activities in this service area are statutory and other activity is subject to regulation from Government. Nationally there is work to consider the future role of the Food Safety Agency, Trading Standards and also wider work to review health and safety legislation. This is a shifting and emerging agenda which may have future implications for Environmental and Regulatory Services locally. The current Plan for Change proposals are shaped to allow for short-term savings to be achieved and also create an efficient service which is fit for the future, but can still respond to changes in national policy direction.
- 6.3 The review has proposed the following vision for the service area:

**Making Bury a better place to live** by enforcing regulations to ensure a safe and healthy environment, which is in line with the council's statutory duties. Providing an efficient and customer based service to Bury's residents and businesses, which is focused on outcomes

6.4 The service will work to support the following outcomes:

- Undertake statutory duties
- Work within national prescribed guidelines (Food Safety Agency and Health and Safety guidance)
- Develop a more proactive work stream to help manage demand and expectations
- Continue effective working across service areas
- Support residents to help make Bury a clean and safe place to live
- Undertake targeted intelligence led work to tackle priority issues
- Encourage greater personal responsibility
- Tackle climate change and its effectives

6.5 The review also acknowledged that the service costs were in the main staff costs and there were very limited discretionary budget elements. The vision and outcomes of the review will be achieved through a mix of short term financial savings:

- Efficiencies from AGMA working and budget reserves: £37,000
- The largest savings are to be found in restructuring following a number of VERs, including a Head of Service post. This will involve some changes to the ways of working and whilst reducing capacity are considered to be achievable: £135,000
- Pest Control is an income generating service but in order to meet required targets a review of the Pest control service, including consideration of increasing charges and incorporating other activities (dog control), will be necessary: £10,000
- Efficiencies from a shared approach to health and safety across the organisation: £45,000
- Shared enforcement and inspection activities through joint working with Highway Services: £15,000.

6.6 Alongside this a number of projects have been identified and these are currently being developed to identify new ways of working to ensure the service is fit for the future. Some of this work may generate further efficiencies, ensuring that the service continues to provide value for money. Projects currently in development include:

- Pro-actively marketing services to external markets
- Explore opportunities to manage demand and promote personal responsibility
- Explore feasibility of a shared reception for Licensing and other regulatory services to provide one point of contact for customers.
- Explore feasibility of gypsy and traveller site being managed by an alternative provider who has specialist skills to provide housing advice to tenants.
- Explore opportunities to deliver a business compliance model. This model allows a more joined up approach to the information and advice we provide to businesses when we visit them for inspection purposes. The approach also allows the council to manage risk more effectively by assessing whether business remain in the 'low risk' categories for inspection/ enforcement activity.

- Explore whether further back office efficiencies can be made through a more co-ordinated approach to business planning to ensure that the service is focused on achieving outcomes and provides a positive customer journey.

## **7.0 Highways Review**

- 7.1 The review has worked on defining and understanding the "as is" position for the service, and process mapping is now underway in respect of key functions to highlight potential efficiencies / service improvements.
- 7.2 The review team has developed some thinking about a vision for the service, as follows:

To develop a highways infrastructure that is:

- Safe
- Free-flowing
- Maintained in a financially sustainable manner
- Supports the Green Agenda and environmental considerations
- Supports the Council's Development Framework (LDF)
- For the benefit of all users – pedestrians, motorists, cyclists etc
- For the benefit of residents, visitors and business users

- 7.3 The review is considering a range of options from the following service areas:
- Street Lighting
  - Network Management
  - Highway Design
  - Car Parking
- 7.4 Options are in place to fulfil the immediate requirement for savings in 2012/13 and longer term options are being developed to secure savings in subsequent years, ensuring the service is "Fit for the Future".
- 7.5 Options under development and consideration at this stage include:
- Energy Saving Options – Street Lighting
  - "A day in the life of a pothole" – process mapping from original report to fixing the defect.
  - Use of new technologies re: Highway repairs
  - Use of new materials re: Highway repairs
  - Reviewing the extent of planned vs responsive repairs to ensure the optimum balance
  - Review of income streams / charges
- 7.6 Many of the options relate to improving working practices, and it is unlikely there will be any public facing impact. However where there is a public interest, then a full consultation exercise will be undertaken to inform the review process.

## **8.0 Adult Learning Review**

- 8.1 The service is the main occupier of the Haymarket building (ex Halifax) the lease on which expires in 2014. Property Services are reviewing the Council's options in respect of the building under the auspices of the Asset Management Plan and given that the future of the building and the Adult Learning service are linked it was decided to review them together.

- 8.2 Whilst this review was not included within the Plan for Change Programme of Savings, it was felt that it would be sensible to undertake the review using the same process that has been adopted for the main Plan for Change reviews. However, no specific savings target has been set.
- 8.3 Aim of the review: The review has been given the aim of identifying the most efficient and effective way to provide the Adult Learning Service delivered to communities, businesses and individuals.
- 8.4 Vision for the service: To help make Bury a life-long learning borough.
- 8.5 The review team has also developed proposals for core values for the service. These are:
- All learners are equal and opportunities to learn will be accessible for all adults in all sections of the community
  - It works closely with and in local communities to strengthen their capacity to grow and flourish
  - Services will be targeted on the basis of clear evidence of need
  - All learners will be targeted to achieve their personal learning goals
  - The service provides a learning experience of the highest quality, whilst managing our resources to obtain best value
  - Services are co-located with partners to reduce costs and improve access to services
- 8.6 Options under development and consideration at this stage include:
- Cease delivery and return money to the Skills Funding Agency
  - Continue to directly deliver adult learning
  - Continue to deliver adult learning at community venues, including libraries.
  - Commission all adult learning provision
  - Blended model of direct delivery and commissioning
  - Continue to deliver adult learning and contribute a surplus to the Council's budget.

## **9.0 CCTV and Control Rooms**

- 9.1 This review involves the examination of the extent and manner of delivery of borough-wide CCTV coverage and the way in which the control room function is exercised. Within the Plan for Change there is a requirement to deliver annual savings of £50,000 by March 2014.
- 9.2 Progress to date:
- Vision established
  - 'As Is' statement agreed
  - Options drawn up
  - Savings identified
  - Initial service changes made
- 9.3 Vision:

Control Rooms – to assist in the development of a co-ordinated and 'One Council' approach to customer contact and service delivery through the provision of multi-functional and efficient operational control rooms.

CCTV – to implement and sustain an efficient and effective CCTV infrastructure within the borough that meets the needs and responsibilities of the Council and

its partners and that contributes positively to the borough's economic and environmental well-being and helps shape and maintain prosperous and safe communities

#### 9.4 Options under development and consideration at this stage include:

##### Control Rooms:

- Decommission control rooms
- Decommission and outsource control rooms
- Deliver through joint working
- Retain in-house and develop efficiencies/business opportunities

##### CCTV:

- Decommission cameras and terminate all operations
- Reduce provision
- Maintain existing provision with selective maintenance and development
- Maintain existing static CCTV provision and develop rapid deployment/mobile capability
- Develop new strategy to expand CCTV use as opportunities arise

#### 9.5 Savings options identified:

2012/13 Invest to Save project to move the Millgate Control room to Bradley Fold - £25,000

2013/14 Further rationalisation of control rooms - £25,000

#### 9.6 The review has identified the following as proposals for initial service changes:

- Consolidate CCTV monitoring at Bradley Fold and cease existing arrangements at the Millgate
- Investigate opportunities to develop closer working with Carelink and consolidation at Bradley Fold
- Develop a corporate approach to intruder and fire alarm monitoring and key-holding
- Implement enhanced and smarter joint working arrangements and crisis support
- Explore external funding opportunities to modernise CCTV provision

## **10.0 Libraries**

10.1 The Library Review is charged with two tasks: to define a new 'vision' for the service and identify a sustainable and fit for purpose future model of service delivery.

10.2 Councils are obliged to provide a public library service and can be monitored and inspected by the Secretary of State. Councils must provide "a comprehensive and efficient service" for all persons who live, work or study within the area that want to make use of it.

10.3 What was deemed to be "comprehensive and efficient" in 1964 has been radically altered as a result of information accessibility (notably via the internet) and the rise in the use of electronic and social media, which has altered the way people read, download content and how they wish to access modern services.

- 10.4 There is also a legislative framework for the Archives Service and legislation enables all local authorities to promote adequate use of their own records and to acquire records of local interest, promoting their use by the public. It also requires local authorities to make proper arrangements for documents in their custody
- 10.5 To help inform the development of a vision and future model of service delivery a statistical needs assessment has been undertaken and a six week consultation exercise has recently been completed.
- 10.6 There were 3,978 responses to the consultation exercise, of which 95% were from current library users. The main themes resulting from that consultation included the following:
- 48% used a library on a weekly basis
  - 84% said they went to a library to borrow items and 50% said to find information.
  - Users 'satisfied' with current service standards
  - 78% thought that combining libraries and other services in one place within communities provided better services for customers
  - 75% thought that the community should be able to use buildings for their own activities for a small fee
  - 61.7% thought that volunteers should be able to get involved in the development and delivery of local library services alongside library staff
  - Co-location and self service should be developed
- 10.7 The review group will continue to work on the development of a draft vision and model of service delivery, which will then be the subject of a public consultation exercise.

**11.0 Economic Development Review** – This is the subject of a separate report on the agenda (Destination Management).

## **12.0 Supporting Information**

More information about the Plan for Change can be found online at [www.bury.gov.uk/planforchange](http://www.bury.gov.uk/planforchange)

## **13.0 Recommendations**

- 13.1 The Committee is asked to:
- Note the proposals being put forward and provide input and comments which can be incorporated into the final proposals prior to consultation and decision by Cabinet.
  - Given the range and scale of these reviews, consider the establishment of overview working groups for each review.

### **CONTACT DETAILS:**

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