

SCRUTINY REPORT



MEETING: OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

DATE: 12th September 2019

SUBJECT: Update on the Corporate Core

REPORT FROM: Councillor Jane Black and Lynne Ridsdale (Deputy Chief Executive, Corporate Core)

CONTACT OFFICER: Lynne Ridsdale (Deputy Chief Executive, Corporate Core)

1.0 BACKGROUND

- 1.1 This document sets out progress on establishment of the Corporate Core services under the remit of the Deputy Chief Executive (Corporate Core) as an update to the July report to this Committee.
- 1.2 A report is scheduled for Cabinet on 23rd September outlining the organisational structure going forward including the posts proposed to be in scope of the Corporate Core, as discussed in the July report to this committee.

2.0 OVERVIEW OF THE CORPORATE CORE

- 2.1 The Human Resources and Appeals Panel agreed the establishment of a common Corporate Core across the Council and the CCG in April 2019, to bring together all "back office" policies, budgets and staff capacity into a single corporate department that operates consistently, cost effectively and to provide added value to the delivery of corporate strategy.
- 2.2 The majority of Corporate Core services / functions will report to the Deputy Chief Executive (Corporate Core). Services in scope of the DCE portfolio are:
- Business support
 - Policy
 - Performance
 - Human Resources
 - Information governance
 - Health and Safety
 - Risk management
 - ICT
 - Communications and engagement
 - Community Safety
- 2.3 Responsibility for all Finance functions (ie accountancy, accounts payable, treasury management, payroll, revenues and benefits) is within the remit of the Joint Chief Finance Officer.

- 2.4 The establishment of the Core, including integration of finance and non-finance teams under separate Executive leadership, is managed through the Corporate Core Programme Board. The Board is Chaired by the Deputy Chief Executive (Corporate Core) with the Joint Chief Finance Officer and Deputy Chief Accountable Officer of the CCG and enabling support from Legal Services; Finance; Human Resources; ICT and Information Governance. The Board meets weekly.

3 PROGRESS IN ESTABLISHING A CORPORATE CORE

3.1 Since the last update to O&S in July significant progress has been made in establishing the Core, as follows:

- All HR teams have been brought together into a single corporate service which will co-locate and deliver a 20% reduction in costs. The corporate structure is the first stage of a longer programme of improvement in people management. The corporate People Strategy will now be updated to reflect organisational priorities and in the first instance will be aligned with the GM Good Employment Charter across the following key areas of employment practice:
 - Secure work
 - Flexible work
 - A real living wage
 - Workplace engagement and voice
 - Excellent recruitment practices and progression
 - Excellent people management
 - A productive and healthy workplace

A fundamental review of all HR related policies, procedures, data and systems is now being planned, with input from managers, staff and in partnership with the Trades Unions.

- A programme managed approach to stabilising IT is underway; the roll out of new devices has been expedited and the telephony system upgrade delivered in September against plan
- The posts in scope of future single Core services as described in section 2.2 have been identified and included in a report to Cabinet seeking permission to consult on establishing the single teams. Subject to agreement, proposals will be the basis of a 90 day consultation period and implemented in early 2020
- Work is underway to strengthen the consistency in compliance and assurance of GDPR and data protection legislation, with workshops underway to refresh the skills and engagement of the network of Information Governance Champions; finalisation of the Council's ROPA (Record of Processing Activity); and a review of arrangements for the disposal of confidential waste
- A review of business support capacity has recently begun, starting with PA provision. Work to date has centred on understanding current activity (eg any variations across departments); benchmarking cost, capacity processes; and considering what elements of work could be addressed through self-

service. This review will be subject to detailed stakeholder engagement and staff consultation around any changes

- The Chief Information Officer has taken up post to lead IT, Policy and Performance functions. The early priority for this postholder will be the programme management of the design of a new Bury Strategy. Work is underway at pace and will involve:
 - capturing the plans, priorities and strategies across all team Bury partners
 - Baselineing the associated outcomes and performance measures of partner plans against Borough issues and priorities
 - Hosting a big “conversation” across Bury residents to capture their strengths, concerns and aspirations for Bury over the next ten years
- The Deputy Chief Executive’s office continue to lead the network of ‘Change Agents’ across the Council and CCG. This is a self-selected network of staff who want to drive and support change across the organisations, within and outside of their normal responsibilities. The network meet monthly and maintain a digital network. An opportunity for further development of the Change Agents in the area of transformational leadership and managing change is being explored through resources available to the CCG. The Change Agents are receiving an early briefing on the Bury Strategy and invited to get involved in the consultation exercise with residents.

4.0 COUNCIL & CCG SERVICES

4.1 The strategic intention is for Council and CCG services to operate as one, in pursuit of efficiencies and shared good practice. The scale and complexity of such change is significant however and therefore the following pragmatic approach to implementation is proposed:

- all Council services to be brought together from former departmental teams into a single corporate service, as a first priority. The scope for ongoing co-provision with the CCG to then be explored. At this stage early priorities for integration are:
 - the communications team, which is already operating under a Joint Head of Service and
 - the performance and intelligence teams who have worked closely for some time
- combined teams, once scoped, to operate under common leadership and to a consistent set of standards and accountabilities but the intention is to avoid Council staff providing any Core support to the CCG on the basis that VAT costs would apply to this arrangement. Further advice on this matter is being pursued by the Finance service

5. PRIORITIES FOR NEXT REPORTING PERIOD

5.1 Moving forward, the process of consulting and finalising scoping proposals for the establishment of corporate teams proposed will be a significant priority. A 90 day consultation period will apply during which staff briefings will be arranged and formal feedback considered through normal consultation procedure. At the end of this period a decision will be taken to bring together

all corporate resources in the teams within the remit of the Deputy Chief Executive (Corporate Core)

- 5.2 One of the teams proposed to be established under new arrangements is health and Safety, bringing together residual functions from Communities and Wellbeing and the former Resources & Regulation department. An early priority for the new team will be to develop a new single health and safety policy for the Council, Schools and CCG and underpinning set of refreshed arrangements. The refreshed policy will clarify that managers within the Council, CCG and schools are responsible for managing health and safety of their staff with support from the professional team, whose focus will be on maintenance of the policy framework; compliance and quality assurance; complex investigations; interface with the HSE and activity/compliance reporting.
- 5.3 It is acknowledged that the future structure changes and service transformation agenda is significant and successful delivery will require meaningful support to staff. At the end of July a session on 'Working Well Through Change' was made available to all Council and CCG staff to outline tools and techniques for individuals to use to successfully manage change and their wider wellbeing. The content from the July session, and similar supportive tools (including the council's Live Better Feel Better wellbeing programme) are being worked up into an e-learning module for staff and as a web-offer, enabling staff to access support from anywhere, on any device. The materials are being developed by staff from corporate teams but also likely to be of particular relevance to their colleagues.
- 5.4 The Corporate Core Management team will also be leading on the design and delivery of a Leadership Conference at the end of September. The intention is to bring together the top three tiers of managers across the Council and CCG to consider the new operating context; receive advice from sector experts (with a keynote speaker from the New Local Government Network) and benefit from workshops which explore key skills sets for leaders in the new environment.

6. CONCLUSION

- 6.1 The development of the Corporate Core is an important undertaking for the council both in terms of culture and effectiveness. Bringing disparate teams together both from within the council itself but also integrating with the CCG will allow for a collection of expertise and more integrated working, whilst removing duplication and inconsistencies.
- 6.2 The Committee are asked to note the good progress which has been made since the last report and advise if this format of update is useful for future meetings.

List of Background Papers:-

None

Contact Details:-

Lynne Ridsdale, Deputy Chief Executive (Corporate Core)
l.ridsdale@bury.gov.uk

0161 253 5002

Executive Director sign off Date: 21/08/2019

JET Meeting Date: 28/08/2019