

ENABLING SERVICES

ENABLING SERVICES

1.0 INTRODUCTION

The Council's Corporate Plan is clear in that the Council budget – in terms of investment decisions and budget savings – should be set according to three key priorities;

- Tackle health inequalities, poverty and disadvantage - narrow the gap between our richest and poorest communities
- Protect the vulnerable, making sure people are safe and feel safe – and can remain independent as long as possible
- Driving economic growth – investing in Wirral's future

The Council is also committed to ensure that savings are identified and delivered based on the following principles where possible:

- Spend less on the cost of running the Council
- Broadest shoulders to bear the greatest burden
- Mitigate the impact of savings on frontline services

This document is designed to provide Members and stakeholders with concise, relevant information related to the challenges and opportunities influencing the future delivery of enabling services.

1.1 Overall Context

The Leader of the Council has been, and remains, unequivocal in his position that the savings we implement should focus on the support services of the Council first and should protect, as far as possible, front line services.

All of our back office services will be completely streamlined; processes will be reviewed, combined and made more efficient. These back office services are ones which Wirral residents rarely see but which are essential to the running of the organisation – things such as finance, IT, human resources and procurement. We will make these functions more efficient and ensure that they provide the best value for money possible.

We are continuing to make sure Council management is stripped down and streamlined and make sure that as much resource as possible is directed to front line service delivery.

We also need to make sure that the Council has an effective, strategic corporate centre able to drive continuous improvement in what is an extremely challenging financial landscape.

ENABLING SERVICES

1.2 Purpose of Session

The purpose of this session is to enable Members to debate the future direction of service provision as described within this document, particularly in relation to the principles which are provided. Members are also provided with a summary of the emerging options within this theme for consideration.

Further work will be completed on developing these options, alongside more, before they are published by the Chief Executive for public, staff and stakeholder consultation in September 2014.

2.0 FUTURE DIRECTION

The design for the enabling services reflects the ambition to create a strong strategic centre whose purpose is to support Members to make choices about the priorities of the organisation, develop strategy and set direction and manage resources through a top-down flow of decision making

This ambition is driven in part by the knowledge gained from work with the Improvement Board and others as to where the focus of the Council's improvement efforts should be placed. Therefore proposals and developments within enabling services will ensure that areas of excellence within services are identified and built upon, and corporate coordination is improved.

Support functions will need to be focussed and more effectively targeted in order to enable and support the wider transformation ambitions and challenges the Council faces. The proposals also form part of the ongoing response to the recommendations of the Improvement Board, which focussed on the strengthening and rebuilding of the corporate centre and senior management capacity.

2.1 Principles for Change

Therefore the future design and delivery model for enabling services will focus on driving the following benefits from the new approach;

- Increased corporate and strategic thinking
- Stronger external focus, able to influence at a local, regional and national level
- Stronger strategic financial planning and forecasting
- Greater internal control and compliance
- Improved quality of professional support and advice

Critically, the proposals will also drive tangible efficiency savings in line with the organisation's overall principle of ensuring maximum value from support functions in order to protect front line services. Key areas where savings are likely to be realised are; centralisation of

ENABLING SERVICES

transactional resources, for example standardisation of processes and increase in automation and self serve; and secondly increased control and compliance around 3rd party spend in order to maximise full value from supplies and services

3.0 EMERGING OPTIONS

The following points and examples have been developed as a guide to inform the future model for enabling services;

- Increase self-sufficiency of all employees and managers in order to reduce demand on enabling services
- Identification of specialist skills and capabilities which require strategic focus, and in some cases investment, through the realignment of existing resources, and the grouping together of generic roles and processes in order to drive value and economies of scale
- Central management and coordination of all resources and budgets relating to support and transactional functions;
- Bringing together of all transactional activities, i.e. all rule driven and process led activity
- Strengthen the corporate core and reduce duplication by bringing together policy, strategy and business planning under the leadership of the Chief Executive and CESG

Options are in development across all services within this theme that fit within the principles described. Initial, emerging options are provided within this report in advance of the fully prepared budget options being published by the Chief Executive in September.

- An increase in self-serve capability and automation of systems, and improved access to management information
- No additional departmental resources or budgets carrying out enabling activity – all support or enabling functions to be centralised
- The centralisation of all delivery of services, resources may still be deployed at a departmental/service level on an exception basis where agreed
- In the short term, all Finance, HR and Revenues and Benefits transactional services will be brought together within one unit, with a view to migrating additional services in the future. This unit will prepare services for potential alternative delivery model, e.g. shared services with other organisations, or transfer of delivery to a 3rd party
- Establishing a single shared services with Cheshire West and Chester for schools traded services, but also working with schools to fundamentally transform the relationship to one based on outcomes delivery through the Children's Trust

ENABLING SERVICES

4.0 SERVICES IN SCOPE

The services below are considered within this theme;

- Business Intelligence
- Transformation and Change
- Health, Safety and Resilience
- Equality and Diversity
- Knowledge Management
- Marketing and Communications
- Neighbourhoods
- Commissioning & Transformation
- CYP Commissioning
- Market Transformation & Contracts
- Procurement
- Call Centre
- Customer Services
- One Stop Shops
- Committee Services
- Coroner
- Electoral Services
- Information & Central Services
- Land Charges
- Legal Services
- Policy & Scrutiny
- Registrar Services
- School Admissions
- Asset Management
- Asset Management : PFI
- Facilities Management
- Human Resources
- Information Technology
- Organisational Development
- Professional Standards
- Benefits
- Finance
- Internal Audit
- Revenues
- School Traded Services
- Integrated Transport