

**TRANSFORMATION PROGRAMME IMPLEMENTATION OVERSIGHT PANEL
MEETING HELD MONDAY 13 MAY 2024**

No	Item	Summary of Key Recommendations
1.	Welcome and Introduction	Received
2.	Apologies	Alderman Boyle, Scott Councillor Nicholl
3.	Declarations of Interest	The Chief Finance Officer (as advised by Chief Executive)
4.	Minutes of Transformation Programme Implementation Oversight Panel meeting held 4 April 2024	Confirmed as a correct record
	For Confidential Consideration (Items 5 - 7 inclusive)	
5.	Action Plan Update	Noted
6.	Update Reports	Noted
7.	Independent Advisor – Update Report	Noted
8.	Reports to Council Committee	Noted
9.	Correspondence	Noted
10.	Date of next meeting: Oversight Panel – Monday 10 th June, 6.00pm, The Council Chamber	Noted

**MINUTES OF THE PROCEEDINGS OF THE
TRANSFORMATION PROGRAMME IMPLEMENTATION OVERSIGHT
PANEL HELD IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER, CIVIC HEADQUARTERS AND
VIA VIDEO CONFERENCE ON MONDAY 13 MAY 2024 AT 6.00PM**

In the Chair: Alderman Knight McQuillan (C)

Members Present: Councillor McCully (C), McQuillan (R), Peacock (R),
Storey (C)

C McKeogh, Independent Advisor (C)

Officers Present: D Jackson, Chief Executive (C)
M Quinn, Director of Corporate Services (C)
A McPeake, Director of Environmental Services (C)
D Wright, Chief Finance Officer (C)
J McCarron, Performance Officer (C)
J Keen, Committee & Member Services Officer (C)

In Attendance: C Thompson, ICT Officer (C)

Press 1(no) (R)

Substitutions: Councillor McCully substituted for Alderman Boyle
Councillor McQuillan substituted for Councillor Nicholl

Key: (R) Attended Remotely
(C) Attended in the Chamber

Alderman Knight McQuillan assumed the Chair.

1. WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

The Chair introduced Independent Advisor, C McKeogh and welcomed her to the meeting.

2. APOLOGIES

Apologies were recorded for Alderman Boyle, Alderman Scott, Councillor Nicholl.

3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest from Elected Members.

The Chief Executive advised there was a standing Declaration of Interest for the Chief Finance Officer.

4. MINUTES OF TRANSFORMATION PROGRAMME IMPLEMENTATION OVERSIGHT PANEL MEETING HELD 8 APRIL 2024

Summary, previously circulated.

AGREED – that the Minutes of the Transformation Programme Implementation Oversight Panel meeting held Monday 8 April 2024 are confirmed as a correct record.

MOTION TO PROCEED ‘IN COMMITTEE’

Proposed by Councillor McCully
Seconded by Councillor Storey and

AGREED – to recommend that Committee move ‘*In Committee*’.

* **The Press left the meeting remotely at 6:04pm**

The information contained in the following items is restricted in accordance with Part 1 of Schedule 6 of the Local Government Act (Northern Ireland) 2014.

5. ACTION PLAN UPDATE

Confidential report, previously circulated, presented by the Chief Executive.

Confidential report by virtue of paragraph(s) 3 & 5 of Part 1 of Schedule 6 of the Local Government Act (Northern Ireland) 2014.

Purpose of Report

The purpose of this report is to update the Implementation Oversight Panel on progress in relation to the Transformation Programme Action Plan.

Recommendations

It is recommended that the Oversight Panel notes this update report as well as the progress against the Transformation Programme Action Plan recommendations.

Leadership / Culture and Relationships

The Chief Executive provided a verbal update in relation to leadership and culture stating that good progress is being made. The organisational health check and structural review have been completed, there has been significant engagement from Elected Members, the organisation and Trade Unions, and reports will be brought to the next Sub Committee meeting. The Chief Executive stated the performance review is also progressing well. Actions from the organisational health check and the people strategy are moving ahead, trainers have been appointed to provide training for the Heads of Service.

He advised the redundancy policy and the discretions policy reports are progressing and will be presented to Corporate Policy and Resources Committee in June.

In response to questions, the Chief Executive stated that Elected Members are in a difficult position when it comes to making decisions when Trade Unions state they are not comfortable with decisions, or they are not in the best interests of their members. The Chief Executive provided assurance that Trade Unions are being kept informed and have not commented to date, that Trade Unions had engaged with the organisational health check.

Governance

The Director of Environmental Services provided a verbal update in relation to Governance stating that very good progress has been made with 13 of the 30 actions now green, and a number of actions have moved from amber to yellow. In relation to recommendations G24, G25, G26, which relate to staff performance appraisals, he stated the system in place needs to be upgraded, and HR aware of this. The Director of Environmental Services advised there are options and timescales but nothing has been implemented as yet, and that Council need to inform the Department for Communities this will not be completed within the deadline. In relation to recommendations G27-30, which are in relation to risk management, he stated the Risk Management Strategy is in draft format and has been approved by Senior Management Team, it is hoped it will be approved via this Sub Committee in June.

In response to the Chief Executive, the Director of Corporate Services confirmed the Risk Management Strategy will be presented at the Audit Committee meeting in June.

Financial Governance

The Chief Finance Officer provided a verbal update on financial governance. There is one outstanding action to be completed, FG8, which is training for Heads of Service, this training will be provided alongside training on the new finance systems. There are 2 other items currently with the Department for Communities, the Chief Finance Officer has a quarterly meeting with the Department for Communities in June and will request an update on the two items.

Record Keeping and Land and Property

The Director of Corporate Services provided a verbal update on Land and Property and Record Keeping. The Director of Corporate Services advised 4 of the 20 actions have been completed, 16 are on course for the timescale set for June. Land and Property policies and procedures are in draft. SIB were in attendance at the Land and Property Sub Committee meetings in April and

May. A workshop has been held with Directors, Heads of Service and relevant Officers and all the actions are progressing.

In relation to Record Keeping the Director of Corporate Services advised 2 of the 7 actions were completed. The timescale for the remaining actions is June and September.

Councillor Storey expressed frustration that those setting the standards for Council are not keeping the standards themselves.

The Chair concurred with the sentiments of Councillor Storey especially as Council were starting to complete the work.

Sub-Committee noted the report.

6. UPDATE REPORTS

Confidential report, previously circulated was presented by the Chief Executive.

Confidential, by virtue of paragraph(s) 3 & 5 of Part 1 of Schedule 6 of the Local Government Act (Northern Ireland) 2014.

Purpose of Report

The purpose of this report is to provide for Members an additional opportunity to comment on, and contribute to, specific elements within the implementation of the Transformation Action Plan.

Recommendations

It is recommended that the Oversight Panel considers the questions raised in this report and provides comment and feedback were deemed necessary.

The Performance Officer advised there is ongoing engagement on a monthly basis between himself, the Independent Advisor and the Department for Communities. The Performance Officer requested feedback from Elected Members in relation to evidence of impact and completion, and risk management.

During the course of debate TPIOP Sub Committee Members provided the following feedback:

- Council will be in a better position to do what it is supposed to do once the recommendations have been implemented.
- Evidence of impact and completion is for Council to have a meaningful working relationship with the Department for Communities.
- For Council to provide the best service for citizens and not hindered by bureaucratic decisions.

- To get back to a “can do” attitude within the Council, to have a positive attitude towards work and life. Council needs to be given credit for task completed – this Council is the only Council bringing 4 Councils together.
- Maintain ourselves at being proactive in a positive approach.
- Council has an annual check to reflect on how to improve.
- To work through the Member Development Working Group to consider the culture of the organisation and the progress being made.
- It has been noticed how Council is progressing - there is continued engagement and positives that will last. This is not measured easily.
- Confidence is a key aspect and is difficult to quantify. When there is more confidence within the organisation Council can move on and improve decision making.
- A confidence in Elected Members and staff working collectively towards better services. Measure the evidence of impact by doing a good job collectively and protect against those who are malicious.
- The cycle of bureaucratic decision making needs to be broken.

The Chief Executive advised that in 2015 Council tried to embrace a culture of a “can do” attitude, a proactive approach to delivering services and a public spirit. Council have always had a cautious approach to risk, Council need to work out the Department for Communities position on Council taking risk and how best to move forward. The Chief Executive reflected on information being presented in social media, robust processes will help Council defend against social media.

The Performance Officer commented on risk and that associated with this project. There are 5 risks which are reviewed weekly, May is a milestone in terms of review, an update will be provided at next months meeting. The Performance Officer outlined the 5 risks as being: potential risk to reputation, health check, organisational structural review, report requirement for engagement, testing and continuing to test and provided an update on progress.

7. INDEPENDENT ADVISOR – UPDATE REPORT

Confidential report, previously circulated, presented by the Independent Advisor, C McKeogh.

Confidential, by virtue of paragraph(s) 4 & 5 of Part 1 of Schedule 6 of the Local Government Act (Northern Ireland) 2014.

Further detail was provided within the confidential report.

Recommendations

1. That as well as the standard update on progress and consideration of risk, the oversight panel receive reports from the Extraordinary Audit

Implementation Steering Group on two issues at the meeting in June 2024 for discussion.

- I. The findings of the organisation health check.
- II. The review of the tier 1-3 leadership structure.

The Independent Advisor stated that she continues to work with Council to ensure matters are progressing. All information provided by the Performance Officer is reliable. The Independent Advisor confirmed that all is moving well. The health check and structural review are complete, and the findings will be presented to the next Sub Committee meeting. Council staff have had to embrace all that needs to be done and get on with completing the work; the attitude and feedback provided is positive. The Independent Advisor advised the Head of OD/HR will be in attendance at the next meeting. The Independent Advisor stated she can work well with Council and is content with all the feedback received.

The Independent Advisor presented via PowerPoint presentation to explain different types of leadership.

The Independent Advisor asked the following questions of Elected Members

- What type of culture feels right for Causeway Coast and Glens?
- In what ways do Elected Members set or influence the culture?
- In what ways do senior officers set or influence the culture?
- Do we need to define the culture for the organisation, or can it be allowed to 'evolve'?
- Do different departments have different cultures and if so, is that OK?
- Are we missing anything?

The Chief Executive suggested that the Senior Officers left the Chamber, the Chair put this to the Sub Committee, Councillor Peacock stated it would not be good culture to ask staff to leave.

During the course of debate TPIOP Sub Committee Members provided the following feedback:

- 2-3 leadership styles would work, and would like to get to participative leadership. Servant leadership would be good especially with frontline staff who know the job. Staff should have the confidence to speak up with ideas.
- Everyone has to make a contribution to the culture of the Council.
- The organisation is governed by a political culture. There is a need to get a balance between Elected Members comments and staff feelings. Staff need to feel safe and not feel inhibited in saying what they need to say.
- Council need to genuinely create an open atmosphere.
- The Chamber is different to the rest of the organisation due to the political nature. Council is a vast organisation and is going to have different cultures within it. Having underpinning values is what Council should aspire to. We should expect a top-down approach, for leadership to set the attitude.
- Positive collaboration is important. The agenda needs to be set for looking into the future.
- A culture needs to be created where everyone can speak up with ideas.

- Decisions lie with Elected Members who want to reflect public opinion. The culture can be political, but it should not create fear for Senior Officers bringing forward information.
- Respect, collaboration and trust are important. There is some change and evolution happening, Council can get to the point where debate happens with respect and trust.

The Independent Advisor stated it is an honour to work with Council and listen to staff. There is a real sense that employees want to do a good job, to have the opportunity and resources to do their job well. The relationship with Elected Members has improved and there is a sense of positivity.

Committee noted the report.

8. REPORTS TO COUNCIL COMMITTEE

The Chief Executive advised the minutes of this Sub Committee will go to the Corporate Policy Committee meeting and to Council, which will inform the Department for Communities thereafter.

9. CORRESPONDENCE

Report, previously circulated, presented by the Chief Executive.

Correspondence received from the Department for Communities entitled Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council – Extraordinary Audit – Next Steps, thanking Council for the quarterly update in the implementation of the recommendations of the Extraordinary Audit, noting the progress being made and assuring Council officials from the Department for Communities will continue to liaise with Council Officers and the Independent Advisor.

The Independent Advisor provided congratulations on receiving a positive message from the Minister for Communities.

Councillor Storey wished to register his frustration at Council not being told who wrote the letter to the Minister of Communities that led to the Extraordinary Audit.

Committee noted the correspondence.

10. DATE OF NEXT MEETING: OVERSIGHT PANEL – MONDAY 10TH JUNE, 6.00PM, THE COUNCIL CHAMBER

The date of the next meeting will be Monday 10 June 2024 at 6.00pm.

Councillor Peacock thanked Alderman Knight McQuillan for chairing the meeting.

MOTION TO PROCEED ‘IN PUBLIC’

Proposed by Councillor Storey
Seconded by Councillor McCully and

AGREED – to recommend that Committee move ‘*In Public*’.

This being all the business, The Chair thanked everyone for their attendance and the meeting concluded at 7:37pm

Chair