

Future Tandridge Programme Update

Audit & Scrutiny Committee 23rd February 2023

Report of: Chief Executive Officer

Purpose: For information

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Wards affected: All

Executive summary

The overall aims of the Future Tandridge Programme ('FTP') programme are to transform the operating model for the Council, to create a smaller, more strategic, agile and responsive organisation, with resources targeted at Council priorities and which is underpinned by a more business-like approach to the way that the Council operates.

A key part of the FTP is the identification and delivery of savings identified in the Service Reviews to ensure a balanced budget is delivered for 2023/24.

A detailed update on progress was included in the Draft Budget report to the Strategy and Resources Committee of 1st December. A further update on savings and the impact to residents and the Council can be found in the Strategy and Resources committee 2023/24 Budget and Medium-Term Financial Strategy report of 31st January. This report should be read in conjunction with the budget papers.

As agreed with the Chairman of Audit and Scrutiny, the focus of this report is on governance, risk and issue management to maximise the opportunity for the FTP to be successful.

This report supports the Council's priority of: Building a better Council.

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Recommendation to Committee:

1. To note the direction of travel for the FTP, the savings identified for delivery in 2023/24 and the associated update set out in the 2023/34 Budget and Medium-Term Financial Strategy report to the S&R Committee on 31st January.
2. To note the approach to risk management being applied and the current programme level risks identified in Appendix B.

Reason for recommendation:

To continue to provide confidence in the governance structure of the FTP and to demonstrate that there is a clear risk management process with escalation in place.

1.0 Background

1.1 Financial context

At the Strategy & Resources Committee on 30th June, a savings requirement of up to £2m was identified to meet the likely shortfall between income and projected expenditure and identified the need for the Service Reviews to deliver a significant proportion of these savings.

The Draft Budget report to the Strategy & Resources Committee on 1st December set out the savings which are planned to be delivered in 2023/24. This was reconfirmed as part of the final budget which was proposed to Strategy & Resources on 31st January 2023. On 9th February 2023, these were approved by Full Council and therefore became the approved savings plan for 2023/24. The final savings plan totals £1.7m.

This report focuses on the governance and risk management arrangements for the FTP. The focus has now firmly moved to delivering the programme, ensuring the planned savings translate to successful achievement of a balanced outturn for 2023/24.

Alongside this, planning for 2024/25 and beyond must now start in earnest, factoring in the need for a new Corporate Plan to shape the priorities of the Council and inform future budgets.

1.2 Future Tandridge Programme

A key part of the programme is the consistent and rigorous review of all services which fundamentally challenges how and why the Council provides the services it does. The focus is on identifying outcomes which support the longer-term operating model for the Council, balanced against short term opportunities to deliver the budgeted savings in 2022/23 and 2023/24.

A full progress update on the programme was reported to the Strategy and Resources Committee on 1st December and updates have been made to Strategy and Resources Committee on 31st January.

The delivery phase of the programme is now underway. As part of this phase, plans have been developed by all service workstreams, with key milestones, resource requirements and associated risks. Consultation on phase 1 restructures began on 17th January 2023 and concluded on 15th February 2023.

2.0 Governance

Through the delivery phase of the programme, the governance and workstream structure for the programme operates at three levels, further details of which can be found in Appendix D.

3.0 Risk and Issue Management

Risk and issue management is undertaken at programme and workstream level. Programme level risks are recorded on a programme risk register and managed through the Programme and Benefits Delivery Board.

Risks are identified, reviewed, assessed and appropriate mitigation is determined to seek to reduce the level of risk identified.

Each risk has an assigned owner and is given both a pre and post mitigation rating. Risks are assessed through the Programme and Benefits Delivery board and updated regularly to reflect where the mitigation or scores may have changed.

Following a review of the FTP risk management process, the process has been modified to make more transparent the changes in post mitigation scoring. Individual mitigating actions relating to a risk and their relative status clearly indicate whether the status has resulted in a change in the score. Where a mitigating action has been completed, this will result in a lowering of the post mitigation risk score. Where mitigating actions have not started or are in progress, this will be indicated in the Mitigating action status column. Additionally, the risk register now tracks any changes in the risk score in order to provide an audit trail.

A view of the current FTP Programme Risk register can be found in Appendix B of this document.

Risks and Issues are also managed at workstream level where these are specific to individual workstreams or projects. Project level risks are escalated to programme level for management through the Programme and Benefits Delivery board where their significance to the overall success of the programme warrants this.

In addition to the above, all Heads of Service will capture risks relevant to delivery of their savings which are reviewed with the Programme team and escalated as required.

A full list of the service savings with associated delivery risks and RAG ratings is in place and monitored with service leads at the delivery board.

There are two areas reporting red risks currently; Regulatory Services and Building Control.

The Regulatory Services review requires further work with our partner authority, Mole Valley District Council to agree a way forward for the partnership which will focus on standardising the approach to Regulatory and Environmental services by using a shared website and introducing productivity improvements. This work will commence in earnest with the Deputy Chief Executive joining the Council from the 20th February 2023.

For Building Control, the red risk relates to the next steps required following meetings with LABC (Local Authority Building Control); an independent body representing LA building control teams. It is acknowledged that a more detailed plan is required to review the operating model and drive further value for all partners in the Southern Building Control Partnership. Tandridge District Council (acting as host authority) will be working with external subject matter experts to develop this plan for subsequent discussion with the partnership. Although this element is rated as red, it stands separately from the savings programmed for 2023/24 which are on course to be delivered, and the risk rating refers to a longer-term plan to maintain and deliver further value for money for the partnership.

A summary of the savings and the Red rated items can be found in Appendix C.

4.0 Resourcing

An initial tranche of resources needed to oversee delivery of the FTP from October to March was approved at the Strategy and Resources Committee on 29th September. This included funding for the overall programme management and dedicated funding in support of individual workstreams. Progress on the use of resources in support of delivery will be provided in future reports.

Recruitment is underway to fill the roles approved in the report however responses to the advertisements has been low. The programme team are following up with agencies and partners to explore other options.

5.0 Comments of the Chief Finance Officer

The FTP is the key mechanism for driving value for money from Council services and for delivering the £1.7m savings target for 2023/24. Effective risk management, and the oversight of Audit & Scrutiny committee, are key elements of ensuring the success of the programme. The full financial context to the FTP is set out in the 2023/24 Budget and Medium-Term Financial Strategy report to Strategy & Resources on the 31st January.

6.0 Comments of the Head of Legal Services

Whilst the FTP represents a significant financial commitment by the Council, this report has no legal implications and the overall programme remains within budget allocation. The delivery of the savings associated with FTP are key to supporting the Council in closing the financial gap in the current and future years. There are a number of proposals within the programme

that span several service areas and the FTP is being managed in conjunction with the Councils mainstream savings programme to ensure there is no overlap and that all savings are accounted for only once

The report outlines that the FTP remains on track to deliver the required outcomes and timelines to cost and budget. However, pressures remain and it will be important to continue to take a robust and consistent approach to governance, but at this time there are no unmitigated major risks.

7.0 Equality

The Council has specific responsibilities under the Equality Act 2010 and Public Sector Equality Duty. Part of this is to ensure that the potential effects of decisions on those protected by the equalities legislation are considered prior to any decision being made.

Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010, provides that a public authority must, in the exercise of its functions, have due regard to the need to:

- eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under the EA;
- advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic (as defined by the EA) and persons who do not share it;
- foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

The three parts of the duty applies to the following protected characteristics: age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy/maternity, race, religion/faith, sex and sexual orientation. Marriage and civil partnership status applies to the first part of the duty.

Members should have due regard to the public-sector equality duty when making their decisions. The equalities duties are continuing duties they are not duties to secure a particular outcome.

The Officers have reviewed the impact of the closure of the Finance Transformation programme and the outcome of this is that the action have no negative or positive impact on protected characteristics and residents. However, the Council will continually monitor the effect of the Budget-setting process and decision-making by using equality impact assessments.

8.0 Climate change

There are no direct impacts on environmental aspects in this programme update report. Climate change implications will be assessed as part of any changes to Service provision through a business case process.

Appendices

Appendix A – Programme highlight report – December 2022

Appendix B - FTP Risk Register

Appendix C – Overall assessment of savings delivery

Appendix D – Programme Governance

Appendix E - Glossary of Terms

Background papers

S&R Committee Report 1st February 2022

S&R Committee Report 30th June 2022

S&R Committee Report 29th September 2022

S&R Committee Report 1st December 2022

S&R Committee Report 31st January 2023

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