

Report of	Meeting	Date
Director Change and Delivery	Shared Services Joint Committee	Tuesday, 13 September 2022

## Update on Shared Services Reviews

Is this report confidential?	No
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Is this decision key?	Not applicable
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### Purpose of the Report

1. To update on the progress of the shared services reviews.

### Recommendations to Shared Services Joint Committee

2. To note the update.

### Reasons for recommendations

3. To update the Shared Services Joint Committee on the current progress and next steps.

### Other options considered and rejected

4. No other options have been considered as the report is for information only.

### Background to the report

5. At the meeting of the Shared Services Joint Committee on the 27 June and full Council meetings on the 19 and 20 July, the approach for phase 3 of shared services was approved, including the recommendation to commence the service review for the Property and Assets service.
6. This report outlines the work that has been carried out so far on the service review including staff engagement which has been undertaken. The report also includes a summary of next steps for the review.
7. A summary of recent work to develop the shared phase 2 (ICT and Customer Services) has also been included within this report.

### Service Review Process

8. The service review process is carried out in line with the Councils' Change Policy and has been adapted from previous shared services reviews to take into account lessons learned and support improved engagement and communication throughout the review.

9. Affected teams were informed of the result of the Councils' decision to commence the service review through a whole service briefing, outlining the process and main objectives of the review and providing an opportunity for staff to ask any initial questions.
10. This has then been followed by a series of Scoping Workshops. These workshops are a new stage for the service review and provide an opportunity for initial feedback and establishing an 'as is' for the service prior to the official start of the service review and pre-consultation. These sessions have focused on developing a better understanding of the teams and roles and responsibilities across the service, alongside the key issues and opportunities which staff think should be considered throughout the review.
11. The workshops have been held over a period of a few weeks to take into account annual leave over the Summer period, with one session for managers and team leaders, followed by six workshop sessions for staff.
12. Initial feedback from staff has been positive about the opportunities of sharing but has revealed areas where further consideration or improvements will need to be made through the review including capacity for the service, maximising systems and technology and opportunities to align and improve processes.
13. The next steps for the review include:

<b>Service Review Outline-</b> w/c 12 September	A Service Review Outline has been developed based on the findings from the Scoping Workshops to outline the main priorities for the review and key engagement questions. A briefing will be held for all staff to introduce the outline and commence the service review.
<b>Pre- Consultation-</b> September	Pre-Consultation will include several workshop sessions to provide the opportunity for teams to share their feedback about what the future shared service should look like.
<b>Desktop review –</b> September	Alongside the Pre-Consultation sessions, a desktop review will be carried out to further explore issues and opportunities identified through staff feedback. This will include some process mapping for key functions, a review of current staffing and budgets, and gap analysis.
<b>Draft report –</b> October	Proposals will be drafted for the service review based on the findings of Pre-Consultation. This will include job descriptions for new roles alongside a risk assessment to be conducted by SMT in relation to service delivery and capacity. This will be presented to members to approve for formal consultation.
<b>Formal Consultation</b> November/ December	Formal consultation will be carried out with all staff and the Union for a period of four weeks. This will include whole service briefings and communication, alongside 1:1 affected meetings for any staff who are directly affected by the proposals.  Any changes following formal consultation will be incorporated into the final review report for sign off by members.

## Phase 2 Services

14. For phase 2 of shared services, significant progress has been made on recruitment to vacant posts within the new structures for ICT and Customer Services which will help to enable service delivery and the development of the shared services moving forwards.
15. The performance within Customer Services has been significantly impacted by an unprecedented volume of calls in relation to central Government's £150 council tax rebate and vacancies within the service which have impacted on capacity across the team.
16. In response to the volume of calls, the councils have provided additional capacity through arrangements with Capita, who on an interim basis have provided support to the Revenues and Benefits service. To manage demand for the discretionary council tax rebate scheme, invitations to eligible residents are being staggered and dedicated resources have been made available with specific staff allocated to manage those calls. Additional hours have also continued to be offered to employees across both councils to further respond to the increase in demand.
17. Recruitment has also been accelerated to help fill the vacancies within the service. In Customer Services and Revenues and Benefits, recent appointments have been made to the Customer Services Manager post, 2x level 5 and 6 posts, 3x level 3 posts, and 9 apprentices.

Role	Number of posts	Start date
Customer Services Manager	1	15 August 2022
Customer Services Officer Level 6	2	Start dates TBC
Customer Services Officer Level 5	2	3 August 2022 1 x start date TBC
Customer Services Officer Level 3	3	2 x July 2022 1 x August 2022
Apprentices	9	4 x July 2022 3 x August 2022 2 x September 2022
Customer Services Officer Level 3 (Temporary)	1 3	25 July 2022 Start dates TBC

18. This has led to positive improvements in performance over June, July and August as shown by the latest available data, indicating improvements across all areas.

	Abandoned %	Answered 90 seconds	Average wait time
<b>June</b>			
Chorley	46.80%	7.4%	00:10:41
South Ribble	37.13%	11.43%	00:12:29

July			
Chorley	39.81%	11.36%	00:08:58
South Ribble	34.75%	7.78%	00:09:30
August			
Chorley	35.23%	15.34%	00:07:28
South Ribble	28.89%	17.39%	00:07:10

19. After internal recruitment and some rounds of external recruitment which have initially been unsuccessful, there remains a number of vacant posts across the service, with interviews expected to take place over September as outlined in the table below. There have also been a number of posts (4.66 FTE) which have recently, or are due to, become vacant in the service relating to staff moving to roles in other areas of the organisations or taking up positions externally. These roles will be advertised and recruited to in line with the councils' policies.

Role	Posts	Closing Date	Interview Date	Status
Revenues Team Leader Level 10	1	5 September 2022	Week commencing 12 September 2022	Out to advert
Customer Services Officer Level 7	1	15 July 2022 Extended to 19 August 2022 then again to 2 September	Week commencing 12 September 2022	No suitable candidates by original closing date  Out to advert
Customer Services Officer Level 5 (Council Tax Recovery)	1	22 August 2022	2 September 2022	3 candidates shortlisted for interview
Customer Services Officer Level 5 (NNDR & Sundry Debts)	1	22 August 2022 Extended to 5 September 2022	Week commencing 12 September 2022	No suitable candidates by original closing date  Out to advert
Apprentices	3	19 September 2022	Week commencing 26 September 2022 or earlier if suitable candidates apply	Out to advert

20. A plan for a training academy has also been established within Customer Services and Revenues and Benefits to set out the training for new starters and apprentices and specialised training for team specialisms. This will be developed over time as the new standardised policies are developed and agreed, but will include a core set of training to ensure that all new starters are quickly trained in key areas and able to provide vital capacity to the team.

21. Training will also be carried out to embed any new processes that are developed through the work of the Customer Services Transformation Lead, with a programme of activity

identified to review current processes for areas of improvement. Current work has focused on a review of the process for Garden Waste subscriptions due to the large volume of calls received from customers during the sign-up/ renewal period.

22. In ICT, recruitment has progressed significantly with a full team now expected to be in place by the end of September.
23. Work has taken place to drive forward the alignment of the service across the councils. An ICT Plan has been developed to outline the key changes to technology to be delivered over the next 6 months including the implementation of aligned infrastructure, network, desktop and mobile hardware and a more consistent approach to system management. A dedicated project team has also been put in place to move the plan forward including communication, project management and technical expertise.
24. New mobile devices (iPads and mobile phones) are scheduled to be rolled out to relevant staff from the 12 September, followed by the roll out of Citrix remote desktop for both councils in early October and laptops throughout October. This will mean that staff from both councils will have access to the same kit and the use of desktops will be replaced with laptops which can be used both at home and connecting to monitors in the office to enable the delivery of flexible working and the councils' Workplace Strategy. Full engagement and training has been identified and planned for staff to help support the effective roll out of these changes.
25. A rolling programme of business system changes and digitisation has been identified for September- March 2023 to review and implement systems to ensure that staff have the best systems in place to work effectively and that business systems across the organisations are used and managed consistently in line with the shared ICT service. This will include ensuring that systems are aligned so staff at either council have the same front-end experience and ensuring that we are making best use of our technology and all functionalities.

### **Climate change and air quality**

26. The work noted in this report does not impact the climate change and sustainability targets of the Councils' Green Agenda and all environmental considerations are in place.

### **Equality and diversity**

27. No Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) and Equality Act implications are required for this update. A full EIA will be conducted as part of the final service review report and proposals.

### **Risk**

28. A full shared services risk register is in place and is reviewed and reported on to the Shared Services Joint Committee as part of the regular Shared Services Monitoring Reports. A specific risk assessment in relation to service delivery will be conducted as part of the service review proposals as part of the final report.

### **Comments of the Statutory Finance Officer**

29. There are no direct financial implications of this report. Implications of individual reviews are included in the relevant reports.

## Comments of the Monitoring Officer

30. No comments.

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