

REPORT TO:	Customer, Performance, Resources and Governance Scrutiny Committee
REPORT NO:	CE/10/18
DATE:	19 December 2018
LEAD MEMBER:	Councillor Mark Pritchard (Lead Member for Organisation – Finance, performance, health and safety and governance)
CONTACT OFFICER:	Ian Bancroft (Tel: 292101)
SUBJECT:	Reshaping Review and Emerging Priorities
WARD:	N/A

1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

To update Scrutiny Committee on the outcomes from the two workshops that were held in order to review reshaping to date, to outline the process for determining the key things to focus on moving forwards (emerging priorities) and to gather initial views from scrutiny on what these areas might be.

2. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 2.1 The Council's reshaping programme began in 2013 and since then we have worked to transform many of our services and made cuts of £33.8m, all whilst continuing to prioritise the most vulnerable.
- 2.2 An end project review of the reshaping programme has been carried out with the project team, but Members and other managers had not had yet fed in their views, therefore two confidential workshops were arranged to allow them the opportunity. The workshops focussed on what went well and what needs to be done differently moving forwards. Information from these is contained in paragraphs 4.4 – 4.8.
- 2.3 The workshops also offered the opportunity to begin discussions on potential future priority areas – the Chief Executive shared his views and Members also made some initial suggestions.
- 2.4 Initial engagement with the public was planned for the Difficult Decisions budget workshop – information on this is outlined in paragraph 4.11.
- 2.5 The results from the workshops will be combined with the findings from the end project review and will be used to help us develop the new priorities (e.g. thinking

cross-organisationally) as well as how we deliver on them (e.g. communication and involvement).

- 2.6 Work to develop the new priorities will continue over the next few months culminating in a report to Executive Board in the Spring seeking their approval for public consultation. It is envisaged the final priorities will be taken to Full Council for approval in early summer.

3 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 That Members of the Committee formulate their conclusions and recommendations based on the information in the report and the discussion at the meeting.**

REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- (i) To support the Council in improving the way it delivers on future reshaping programmes and to develop future priorities.

4. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Background

- 4.1 The Council's reshaping programme began in 2013 and since then we have worked to transform many of our services and made cuts of £33.8m, all whilst continuing to prioritise the most vulnerable.
- 4.2 An end project review workshop of the programme had taken place with the project team and senior leadership team in December 2017, however other managers and Members had not had chance to share their views. Therefore, before moving onwards in the Council's reshaping journey, this wider group needed to also review what has gone well so far and what we need to do differently moving forwards.
- 4.3 It was agreed to hold two confidential workshops (one for Members and one for managers) during November to gain their views. The workshops would also be a good opportunity to start the thinking around what key priority areas we should be focussing on moving forwards complementing the current Council and Well-being Plans.

Workshop outcomes

- 4.4 31 managers from Tiers 4 and 5 attended the manager's workshop with all departments being represented, and 21 Councillors and six members of SLT attended the Member workshop.
- 4.5 What went well: In summary it was felt that our reshaping partner brought pace, transparency and challenge and some teams had changed the way they work as a result of their involvement. Another benefit was that the programme brought people from different departments together.
- 4.6 Members also identified that there was now more streamlined staffing at the senior level, consultation on the budget has improved, centralising procurement has worked well and that we have continued to balance our budget with the majority of the public being unaware of the difficulties faced.

- 4.7 What we need to do differently moving forwards: Officers identified that in the future we need to: involve staff earlier and continually communicate; look at savings corporately not by department; value employees and use their knowledge; improve ICT to support changes; and ensure Members are committed to changes. They felt the vision needs to be further articulated and we should aim to stop being led by the budget cuts if possible.
- 4.8 Members felt we need better communication and a two-way dialogue with the public and that we should work better across the public sector and consider collaboration or partnership working. They also said we need to look across the whole organisation and not individual departments.

Emerging areas of focus

- 4.9 During both workshops the Chief Executive, Ian Bancroft, outlined some of the strategic context we are operating in and outlined some areas he felt we could focus on moving forwards including: a strong economy with a vibrant town-centre that attracts people in; a common purpose for Wrexham – being able to articulate and agree what we want to achieve in Wrexham in the future across organisations and then delivering together; supporting communities and residents to make sure that our towns and villages are resilient moving forwards; and acting as one Council to deliver on our priorities; all whilst continuing to balance the budget.
- 4.10 Members were then given the opportunity to start thinking about what other things we might focus on – these were initial thoughts and it was highlighted that these may not end up as our final priorities but that it was useful to get initial suggestions. This discussion also focussed on ensuring that what we do considers our Well-being Plan objectives – attached at appendix one for information.
- 4.11 It was intended to start engagement with the public on ‘What is important to them’ at the budget consultation event on 28 November, however due to the low attendance this was not possible.
- 4.12 Scrutiny members are asked to highlight any suggestions they have as a committee for priority areas for further consideration.

Process to be followed

- 4.13 The reshaping review findings will be combined with the findings from the end project review (carried out in December 2017) and will be used to help us develop the new priorities (e.g. thinking cross-organisationally) as well as plan how we deliver them (e.g. communication and involvement).
- 4.14 The Council’s current vision will be articulated to make it ‘real’ for people by considering what achievement of this vision will look and feel like for the public, for our employees and perhaps for our partners.
- 4.15 Further workshops will take place with Lead Members and the senior leadership team during January to consider a range of information (such as key data, previous consultation results, the Well-being Assessment and Plan), policy drivers, pressures, and ambitions etc. to identify a number of potential priorities.

4.16 Meetings / workshops with all Members, political groups and senior managers will also take place with the aim to report potential priority areas to Executive Board in February 2019 (or March if necessary) to gain their views and seek approval for public engagement and consultation. It is anticipated the final list of priorities could be agreed by the Council in early summer.

4.17 Scrutiny members are asked for their views on the outlined process.

5. IMPLICATIONS

5.1 **Policy Framework** – It is a requirement of the Well-Being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 that the Council must set well-being objectives and the Local Government (Wales) Measure 2009 requires the Council to publish an annual Improvement Plan which sets out the Council’s Improvement Objectives. The Council Plan will be the mechanism by which Wrexham County Borough Council publishes this information; the objectives set out within the Plan, whilst referred to as well-being objectives are both the Council’s well-being objectives and improvement objectives under the relevant legislation. The priorities which will be set as a result of this process will be intrinsically linked to delivery of the overall Council Plan.

5.2 **Budget** – There are no budget implications contained within this report. However the priorities set will continue to be a key driver in allocating resources and future cash limited budgets.

5.3 **Legal** – The Council Plan framework sets out the Council’s arrangements to secure continuous improvement in the exercise of its functions and to set improvement objectives each year in accordance with the requirements of the Local Government (Wales) Measure 2009.

5.4 **Staffing** – There are no staffing implications contained within this report.

5.5 **Equality/Human Rights** – There are no equality / human rights implications contained within this report. Equality Impact Assessments will be begun when there is an idea of what the potential priorities could be.

5.6 **Risks** – There are no risk implications contained within this report.

6. CONSULTATION

6.1 Engagement with the public was planned to commence during the Difficult Decisions budget consultation event on 28 November 2019, however this was not possible. Information from previous consultations will be utilised in the January workshops to help inform thinking.

6.2 Further engagement and consultation with the public will commence once potential priorities have been developed and approved for consultation by Executive Board.

BACKGROUND PAPERS	LOCATION	WEBSITE INFO.

Our Well-being Plan

15 well-being objectives:

- All people have opportunities to learn and develop throughout their lives
- Children and young people are given a healthy start in life
- People can live healthily, happily and independently in their old age
- People have positive mental health
- People are able to make healthy choices
- Our town is vibrant and welcoming
- There are good employment opportunities in Wrexham
- There is a range of things for people to do in their spare time
- The economy in rural areas is well supported and can thrive
- All people have access to good quality, appropriate homes throughout their lives
- People can travel easily around the County and beyond
- The Welsh language is thriving
- Tourism supports the local economy
- The county borough is a safe place to live
- Our communities are prepared for the future

4 cross cutting themes:

- Poverty
- Equality
- Welsh language
- Climate change