

Performance, Finance and Customer Focus Overview and Scrutiny Committee



Date of meeting:	02 March 2022
Title of Report:	Business Support Programme Review
Lead Member:	Councillor Mark Deacon (Cabinet Member for Customer Services, Culture, Leisure & Sport)
Lead Strategic Director:	Andy Ralphs (Strategic Director of Customer and Corporate Services)
Author:	Ross Johnston
Contact Email:	ross.johnston@plymouth.gov.uk
Your Reference:	
Key Decision:	No
Confidentiality:	Part I - Official

Purpose of Report

To provide the Performance, Finance and Customer Focus Overview and Scrutiny Committee with a review of the changes and benefits of the Business Support Review Programme.

Recommendations and Reasons

To note the changes to PCC's business support services.

Alternative options considered and rejected

N/A

Relevance to the Corporate Plan and/or the Plymouth Plan

The Business Support Review was established to deliver change against three commitments:

1. Empowering our people to deliver
2. Provide a quality service to get the basics right first time
3. Providing value for money

Implications for the Medium Term Financial Plan and Resource Implications:

The Business Support Programme contributed significantly to the balancing of PCC's budget in 2021/22 and has further forecast deliverables that support the budget arrangements set for 2022/23.

Financial Risks

N/A

Carbon Footprint (Environmental) Implications:

N/A

Other Implications: e.g. Health and Safety, Risk Management, Child Poverty:

* When considering these proposals members have a responsibility to ensure they give due regard to the Council's duty to promote equality of opportunity, eliminate unlawful discrimination and promote good relations between people who share protected characteristics under the Equalities Act and those who do not.

N/A

Appendices

*Add rows as required to box below

Ref.	Title of Appendix	Exemption Paragraph Number (if applicable) <i>If some/all of the information is confidential, you must indicate why it is not for publication by virtue of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 by ticking the relevant box.</i>						
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7
A	Briefing report title							
B	Equalities Impact Assessment (if applicable)							

Background papers:

*Add rows as required to box below

Please list all unpublished, background papers relevant to the decision in the table below. Background papers are unpublished works, relied on to a material extent in preparing the report, which disclose facts or matters on which the report or an important part of the work is based.

Title of any background paper(s)	Exemption Paragraph Number (if applicable) <i>If some/all of the information is confidential, you must indicate why it is not for publication by virtue of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 by ticking the relevant box.</i>						
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

Sign off:

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Originating Senior Leadership Team member: Andy Ralphs											
Please confirm the Strategic Director(s) has agreed the report? Yes											
Date agreed: 18/02/2022											
Cabinet Member approval: Councillor Mark Deacon approved by email											
Date approved: 21/02/2022											

I. BUSINESS SUPPORT REVIEW CONTEXT

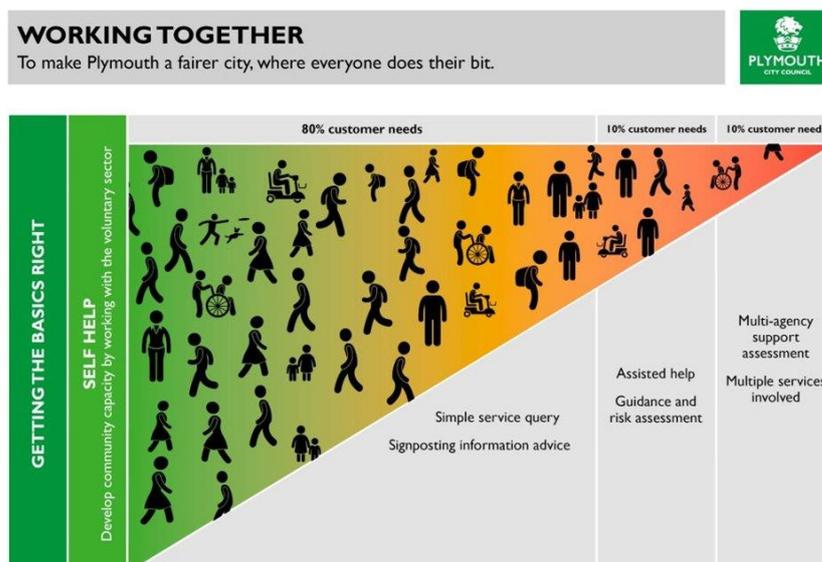
I.1 What is Business Support in PCC?

Business Support was defined as the functions which provide support to the delivery of frontline and or specialist services. The project team undertook a comprehensive review, which included desktop research, interviews with staff and managers, visits to management teams and a digital questionnaire. The findings of the review showed that in PCC business support was performed across the organisation and that the practice was varied and decentralised. The analysis also defined the scope of the review which was finalised to include 46 roles profiles, with 283.17 FTE creating a total baseline payroll cost of £7.6m.

I.2 Why were we changing Business Support in PCC?

Over the previous five years, PCC had led a number of transformation initiatives that changed the way we work. In assessing the journey of previous transformational efforts from 2016-2020 it was clear that PCC was now in a position to think innovatively about how it could operate its business support services. An operating model (Figure 1) was agreed which highlighted the importance of transforming how we delivered transactional support to customers and internally, to meet the 80% of customer needs.

Figure 1: Corporate Operating Model



The outcomes of previous transformations had seen the creation of a digital service, a centralised service centre, a move away from desktop PCs to laptops and an expansion of digital practices in the adoption of M365 Technologies. In addition, changes in both staff and customer behaviours as well as the continuing pressures for PCC to save money led to a portfolio of change called 'The Way We Work' (TWWW) being approved. A fundamental programme in TWWW was the Business Support Review and in October 2020, the Change Board approved the Business Support Review Business Case.

I.3 What were the Business Support Programme's objectives?

The Business Support Review's business case outlined the vision to 'deliver modern, digitally focused, flexible, and efficient business and administration services to all PCC departments'. The vision was to be achieved by delivering against three strategic aims:

- Use existing skills, increasing comfort with digital and the growing carbon agenda to seek to replace legacy technology systems and manual processes with modern, digital, and standard ways of working.
- Use existing service centre functions and capabilities and growing digital skills to create efficiencies and deliver savings of £1.863m (200k in 2020/21 and 1,663m in 2021/22) to support balancing the corporate budget by remodelling the business support organisation structure to remove inconsistency and achieve the requisite financial savings.
- Use best practice and industry approaches to put in place a more rigorous management of business support to control outcomes, increase knowledge and create a resilient operation.

1.4 How was the Business Support Programme structured?

The Business Support Review was established as a programme and its delivery has been aligned to the Corporate Plan's priorities of:

1. Empowering our people to deliver
2. Provide a quality service to get the basics right first time
3. Providing value for money

The Business Support Review was separated into three key project areas:

Technology Transformation - to improve business support's use of digital tools and optimise the investments that PCC have already made in Microsoft and other digital technologies.

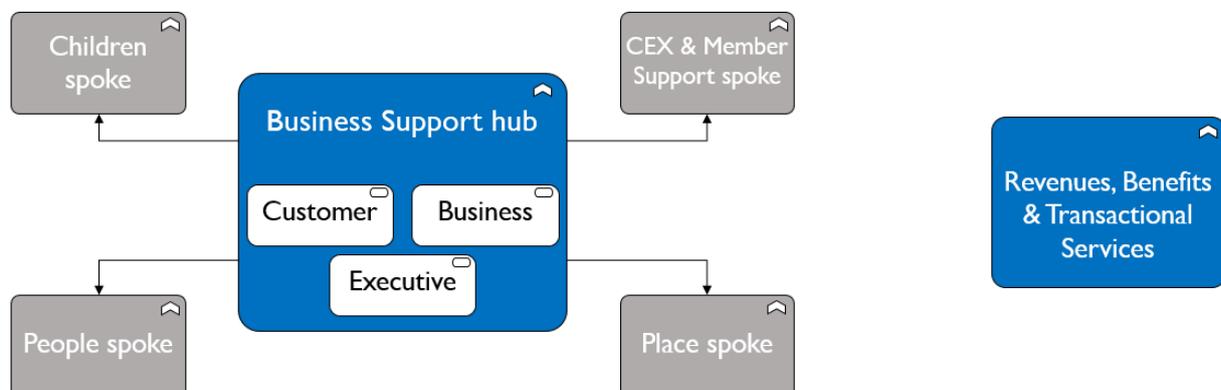
Process Transformation - to work with staff in scope and Digital Services to co-design and deliver simplified, streamlined, and digital processes where possible.

Organisational Design - to deliver a new Business Support Service, realise the required savings target from restructuring the organisation and developing a modern service with staff equipped with the right access and skills to use modern technologies.

2. WHAT IS BUSINESS SUPPORT NOW

On 12 January 2022 the new Business Support Service went live, see staffroom article [here](#). The launch was successful with all Team Leaders and Service Managers understanding their role and the requirements to develop their respective service and teams, in line with the new structure (Figure 2).

Figure 2: Business Support Structure Overview



This new structure was delivered following a variety of technology and process changes. These changes were fundamental in creating an environment that supported modern, efficient and streamlined business support services.

3. WHAT BENEFITS / OUTCOMES HAVE BEEN DELIVERED

The Business Support Review has achieved:

- £423k benefits in 2020/21 financial year – achieving 200% above business case target of £200k for 2020/21 through vacancy management;
- £1,475m permanent savings achieved following the removal of 61.8 posts through vacancy deletions and restructure delivered Nov – Dec 2021 and role profile rationalisation (detail outlined in Table 1).

Table 1: Overview of Organisational Change from Business Support Review

Theme	Baseline	Post Restructure	Change (Benefit)	% Change
Number of FTE Established Posts	283.17	221.36	- 61.81	- 21.8%
Number of Role Profiles	46	27	- 19	- 41.3%
Cost of Business Support	£7.6m	£6.2m	- £1.4m	- 18.5%

- Developed and launched an interactive ‘one stop’ [business support staffroom](#) page for all business support requests and activities integrating our existing digital tools
- Developed an interactive, automated and transparent reporting tool through Power BI, to share business support performance in an open and visual manner through a published dashboard on business support staffroom page;
- Developed and launched an automated and intelligent chatbot service, serving customers digitally at the first point of contact through Facebook;
- Increased the number of online forms, improving and increasing internal digital access to services;
- A cultural shift, where new tools, new digital and technical skills and amendments to service delivery have increased data driven management (new reporting), self-service delivery from senior management (utilising automated technology), matrix management (developing a modern structure) and improved ownership (performance visibility).