The Highland Council

Council Redesign Board – 18.3.16

Agenda Item	**5**
Report No	**RDB/ 2/16**

Proposed methods for the Board: discussion paper

Report by the Chief Executive

Summary

This report proposes a range of methods for the Board to discuss and consider in support its leadership of the redesign project.

1.   Background

1.1   The methods the Board seeks to use would be set out in a project plan along with timescales to ensure delivery of the proposals within the timeframe agreed by the Council. Proposed methods and the support for the Board were included in the Council report. These are offered for each objective of the Board's work, as proposed in the draft Terms of Reference, for Board members to discuss and consider.

2.   Proposed methods to achieve the objectives

2.1   Methods for objectives 1 and 2
            1. A statement of the Council's purpose and values; and
            2. Clarity on the outcomes the Council seeks to achieve.
        To develop a statement of the Council's purpose and values and to clarify the outcomes the Council seeks to achieve it is proposed that early workshop(s) are held with the Board. These could be facilitated internally or with external support. Information already available from various sources can be used in the workshop; this would include e.g. the Christie Commission findings with its focus on prevention and public feedback already receievd.

2.2   Wider engagement on the draft statement could be sought from the Council, Citizens' Panel and discussions with partners, Trade Unions and staff groups. There would be options for further public engagement using social media too.

2.3   Methods for objective 3: Reprioritising statutory and non-statutory duties to achieve the outcomes and reviewing the standards to which services should be delivered to achieve the outcomes
        As part of the budget savings process for 2016/17 work was initiated on the nature of Council Services and whether they are:
        • Mandatory – services which <u>must</u> be provided
        • Permissive – services which <u>may</u> be provided
        • Regulatory powers – powers to regulate certain industries (can be mandatory or permissive).

        This has provided an indication of the extent of discretion the Council has in

providing them. Around 270 functions were initially identified across the Council:

- Around 50 were seen as statutory with little discretion;
- Around 100 were seen as statutory with significant discretion; and
- Over 110 were seen as discretionary.

2.4   This analysis could be used to assist the Board in:

- Mapping the functions against the outcomes the Council seeks to achieve;
- Re-prioritising the functions to achieve the outcomes;
- Identifying if there are any gaps – either in functions or outcomes;
- Identifying what could cease – and the transition arrangements required; and
- Reviewing the standards in use.

2.5   Engagement with stakeholders on the re-prioritisation could be designed depending on the changes proposed. Some changes may be service specific so engagement would be with particular groups of service users, partners or staff affected. If the changes proposed are more general then engagement with the Citizens' Panel may make sense if the Board wants to gauge public views. If the changes are likely to be more controversial then a Citizens' Jury approach might be helpful to get deeper consideration and sounding from the public. Citizens' juries enable a group of citizens to deliberate on a difficult issue and reach a reasoned position. If the Board wishes further information on citizens' juries and how they have been applied elsewhere can be provided.

2.6   <u>Methods for objective 4: Recommendations on options for the delivery of public services that are affordable and designed with performance in mind</u>
The methods to achieve this objective should enable challenge and new thinking on how services can be delivered with a reducing budget.

2.7   As set out in the Council report the options may include:

- in-house delivery;
- shared service delivery with a partner;
- integrated service delivery with a partner;
- out-sourced delivery (various models including arms-length vehicle, commercial operation, social enterprise and with commissioning and procurement requirements in mind);
- commercially run service (in-house, shared or out-sourced);
- a community-run service – (this could include a variety of arrangements from being a commissioned service to an independently run service and with various degrees of volunteer and Council support required).

2.8   The methods could include:

1. Ideas generation / options development – to develop the ideas and options above further;
2. Appraising the options – with a framework agreed that reflects the outcomes from the Board and considers e.g. costs, impacts on people and places, performance expectations, public engagement

expectations;

3. Financial analysis – the Council has agreed to adopt the principles of zero-based budgeting;

4. Reaching consensus on recommendations from the Board – this could involve further engagement with stakeholders at this stage or later to consult on preferred options using the methods as above and depending on who is affected and has knowledge to share.

2.9   Support for using the methods could be drawn from:
- In-house knowledge;
- Other local knowledge – e.g. from partners, other providers, those potentially affected;
- Knowledge of what works elsewhere and what has failed elsewhere, e.g. from external input to the Board;
- External challenge on options proposed, this could be from the engagement with those affected and/or by independent views brought to the Board.

2.10   Methods for objective 5: Clear links to the Council's localism agenda
How to support the localism agenda is likely to include:
- Thinking through the right scale for different aspects of Council business and the Council's priorities – linking to the outcomes and the other objectives above;
- Understanding local needs for service;
- Understanding costs of services across localities;
- Understanding local impacts of proposals;
- Understanding capacity for change;
- Knowledge of what works elsewhere;
- Learning from failure elsewhere.

2.11   A range of information can be drawn from internal sources, other local sources and external views to consider these issues.

2.12   Methods for objective 6: Recommendations on increasing public participation in Council services
The Council's programme currently has commitments to enable more public participation in Council services and there are new duties to support public participation including in decisions about resources from the Community Empowerment Act (2015). We expect to have the statutory guidance on public participation by September 2016 and this can be designed into the wider changes arising from Council redesign. In addition, methods could include:
- Ensuring new arrangements reflect Members' ambition for public participation;
- Learning from good practice internally and from elsewhere;
- Identifying new ways of encouraging participation, especially the new digital platforms being developed;
- Considering how to increase the capacity among staff and communities to support more public participation.

2.13   Methods for objective 7: Recommendations on the structure and management
        of Council operations
        Structural change would follow from the work outlined above, be matched to
        outcomes, priorities and affordability. It would be influenced by the issues of
        scale and localism considered by the Board. The time for considering that
        would be later in the Board's process when the outcomes, priorities and
        preferred delivery options are developed. The Board may also want to
        consider at that time a phased introduction to the changes proposed.

2.14   Methods for objective 8: A draft programme to support organisation change for
        modern public services and for staff and Member development.
        A programme to support the redesign, resourced for the 3 year budget period,
        is likely to be needed to enable the changes agreed. The time for drafting that
        would be later in the Board's process when the scale and type of change that
        is proposed is known.

2.15   Information could be drawn from in-house knowledge, other local knowledge
        and from external advice to the Board.

3.   Concluding remarks
3.1   The methods proposed to achieve the objectives are for the Board to consider.
        Choosing the methods to use will depend on timing, who else the Board seeks
        to involve and how the Board's work progresses. Some work streams from the
        methods would run in sequence, e.g. outcomes and priorities identified before
        options are proposed and structures considered; whereas others could run
        concurrently, e.g. cost analysis and some engagement. In terms of engaging
        others, this could be at different points in the process e.g. in generating ideas,
        in considering options, and in understanding impacts. In addition the Board
        may be interested in trying other complementary approaches, e.g. whether it
        might be appropriate for a citizens' jury approach throughout the process.

3.2   As noted in the report to Council and in the Terms of Reference the work of
        the Board may have to adapt depending on external changes for the Council
        and this too could affect the methods the use.

3.3   The Commission on Highland Democracy would operate independently from
        the Board and the Council. Its findings and recommendations will be of
        interest to the Board. Further information on how the Commission would
        operate is to be presented to the Council in May 2016.

4. Recommendation

4.1 Board Members are asked to discuss and consider the range of methods proposed for support it achieve its objectives within the timescale set. These draw on:

- Information already available;
- In-house knowledge;
- Other local knowledge; and
- External advice and challenge.