

Agenda Item	10
Report No	HC/40/17

HIGHLAND COUNCIL

Date: 26.10.17

Report Title: **Redesign of Highland Council Progress Report**

Report By: The Chief Executive

1. Purpose/Executive Summary

- 1.1 This report provides Members with an up-date of the Board's activities since the Council meeting last month. Two Board workshops have been held at the time of writing and another is planned for mid-October. The Board has focused on its programme of reviews and staff engagement. No Council decisions are required on redesign at this time.

Recommendations

- 2.**
- 2.1 Members are asked to:
- i. Note the Board's programme of reviews, its progress in commissioning five peer reviews and the learning from Lean reviews underway.
 - ii. Note that Board workshops are open to all Members to attend and that Members can propose areas for review to the Board.
 - iii. Note the engagement with managers and the programme of local staff forums being held to brief staff and to share their views and ideas.
 - iv. Note the work in progress around the Council being more commercially-minded, community-minded and the development of a Redesign Board communications plan.
 - v. Note the positive feedback from the external auditors on the progress made by the Board to date.

3. Introduction

3.1 At the Council meeting on 7th September Members agreed that the Redesign Board would report its progress to each meeting of the Council. Since then the Board has met twice in workshops, with another planned this month and some Board members have engaged with managers in management briefings. Recent Board activities are described more fully below and can be tracked on the [website](#). No redesign decisions are sought from Council at this time.

4. Action to support the Board's objectives

4.1 The Board has five objectives agreed at Council in September along with an action to develop a redesign communications plan. These provide the framework for the Board's work plan. The objectives are:

1. The Council is more open-minded to new ways of delivering services;
2. The Council is more commercially-minded by adopting more efficient business practice;
3. The Council is more community-minded.
4. Staff and Members are supported in the change that is needed by a programme of organisation change and support
5. The Council is adopting new ways of supporting constructive working relationships (across Members, staff, partners and communities).

An up-date on action for each objective is described below.

4.2 More open-minded

In the two workshops held since September the Board has considered its overall [review programme](#) and discussed several areas under review. It has:

1. Commissioned five new peer reviews;
2. Learned about three new Lean reviews; and
3. Scrutinised progress with a peer review concluded this year into services for looked after children.

4.3 The five new peer reviews and their status are listed below. All reviews have Board Members (elected members and Trade Union representatives) involved. The 18 staff involved in review teams have all received team induction which also involves the host Head of Service. They will use the [peer review framework](#) in preparing redesign proposals. Directors are appointed to provide support and challenge to review teams.

1. Music tuition: the Board agreed the scope for this review in September and early proposals for redesign will be discussed in a workshop in November. Board recommendations will be agreed in a formal Board meeting in early December. This review is engaging a wide range of stakeholders, including instructors, principal teachers, primary head teachers, pupils and parents.
2. Commissioned preventative services for children: the Board agreed the scope for this review in September. Early proposals for redesign will be discussed in a workshop in mid-December with recommendations agreed later that month in a formal Board meeting. This review includes a thorough understanding of the many individual contracts and service level agreements currently in place and their relationship to service priorities. A stakeholder workshop has been held.
3. Grey fleet: the Board agreed the scope for this review in October. Early proposals for redesign will be discussed in a workshop in mid-December with recommendations agreed either later that month or in January in a formal Board meeting.

4. Car parking: the team was established in late September and the Board will agree the scope of the review at its next workshop in November. A formal Board meeting will be scheduled in January to agree redesign recommendations.
5. Procured legal services: the team was established in late September and the Board will agree the scope of the review at its next workshop in November. A formal Board meeting will be scheduled in January to agree redesign recommendations.

- 4.4 The five peer reviews underway will all report in time to inform the Council's budget process for 2018/19. There is scope to commission further reviews this year and Members are reminded that they can make proposals for peer reviews to the Board. New review activity may arise from the work of the other budget groups covering prioritisation, efficiency, income and commercial themes.
- 4.5 A programme of Lean reviews is underway and in the two workshops held since the last Council meeting the Board has learned about the lean reviews underway in:
1. The recruitment of fostering and adoptive parents;
 2. The billing and recovery in our commercial waste collection service; and
 3. The arrangements for booking and paying for school lets.
- 4.6 The Board has been very appreciative of the staff efforts and enthusiasm in identifying the changes needed and in putting new arrangements in place to streamline and simplify our processes. These changes improve services, empower staff and help to reduce workload and costs. They bring teams together often from different services to solve problems. Although these three Lean reviews are still in progress, their achievements include:
- New processes to recruit fostering and adoptive parents to reduce the 18 month recruitment period, reduce the 83% drop out rate, reduce Social Worker time spent on administrative tasks and improve carer data to support the duty officer.
 - Identifying the actions needed to ensure all commercial waste services provided by the Council are paid for, making it easier for customers to pay on time and to pursue non-payment quickly with new systems for recovery developed.
 - Reducing the number of steps involved in school lets booking from 61 to 8, by introducing an on-line booking facility, a central booking team with better controls and service assurance, better data on bookings with scope for improved marketing and new income generation and recovery of all payments due.
- 4.7 While each Lean review highlights the improvements for the particular service being reviewed, they produce wider benefits too; often identifying further areas for Lean reviews and introducing new systems that can be used more widely. Lean reviews reported so far also demonstrate a positive culture evolving in the Council, especially around the Council being more open-minded, commercially-minded and efficient, trusting staff as experts in their own field to identify and make positive change.
- 4.8 The Board also discussed an up-date of the actions agreed from the peer review of services for looked after children. That review highlighted 12 actions which were being progressed. New projects were discussed as alternatives to out of authority placements. In the previous year £1.6m of costs had been avoided and these costs avoided would continue to be tracked.

4.9 More commercially-minded

The Board has considered a range of energy options for the Council to pursue. Member workshops and briefings have been run. Scoping work will continue to make the most of Council assets and opportunities. Now that the Commercial Board is established the Redesign Board will develop its working relationship with it, avoiding duplication and making the most of the commercial opportunities for the Council.

4.10 More community-minded

In the work plan agreed at the Council meeting in September, the Board is likely to focus on this topic at its December workshop. In the meantime local workshops are scheduled from the end of this month to early December for local members to consider how to develop the Council's approach to localism, including how to support more community-run services.

4.11 Supporting staff and Members in the change that is needed

In September all Council managers were invited to management briefings. Four were held and the Chair of the Board, Cllr Carrick and John Gibson the Trade Union representative on the Board took part in briefing managers on Council redesign. Over 100 managers attended. The briefings covered the Council's approach to financial planning, workforce planning and redesign, including information on the Lean programme, and set out clearly the challenge facing the Council and how we are responding to it.

4.12 Local staff forums are now programmed and advertised to give staff an opportunity to be briefed and to share their views and ideas. Members of the Board have been invited to participate locally along with Trade Union representatives. The programme is set out below.

Staff base	Venues	Date and time
Fort William	Chamber, Lochaber House	30.10.17 2-3.30pm
Broadford	Broadford Village Hall	9.11.17 12- 2pm
Dingwall	Chamber – Session 1	9.11.17 11 – 12.30
	Chamber – session 2	9.11.17 1- 2.30pm
Ullapool	Ullapool Village Hall	17.11.17 11-1pm
Nairn	Courthouse Chamber	22.11.17 9.30 -11am
Inverness	Chamber – session 1	22.11.17 2-3.30pm
	Chamber – session 2	29.11.17 3-4.30pm
	Lotland St	16.11.17 11-12.30
	Diriebught Rd Depot	16.11.17 9-10.30am
Wick	Council chamber	28.11.17 11-12.30pm
Thurso	Janetstown Depot	28.11.17 2–3.30pm
Lairg	Community Centre	29.11.17 10.30 -12pm
Kingussie	An Talla Community hall	30.11.17 9.30-11am
Drummuie	Chamber	30.11.17 10-11.30
Portree	Chamber	1.12.17 2-3.30

4.13 Constructive working relationships

Board workshops and meetings are open to all Members to attend and non-Board Members are very welcome. Redesign is a standing item at Staff Partnership Forum meetings and preparatory work has been done for the meeting with Members and Trade Unions on 2nd November 2017.

4.14 Communications Plan

A communications plan has been drafted and circulated to the Board for discussion. There was insufficient time at the last workshop to discuss this so it will be considered at the November workshop. At that time the Board can also consider the feedback from the Citizens' Panel on redesign issues, as referred to in a separate report to this meeting of the Council.

5. Future actions planned

- 5.1 Board workshops are generally well attended. As agendas become busier given the Board's work plan, workshop times may need to be extended or additional workshops held. An additional workshop is to be held on 17th October 2017 to discuss the redesign of school lets in advance of any recommendations being made to a future EDI Committee.
- 5.2 The Board will continue to support and challenge service reviews, learn about Lean reviews and consider in-service reviews. New work to progress includes the support for more community-run services (linked to developing localism), organisational change and partnership perspectives.

6. Implications

- 6.1 There are no new resource, legal or Gaelic implications arising from this progress report.
- 6.2 There are resource implications in that redesign is a budget theme and reviews overseen by the Board will help to reduce the Council's budget gap.
- 6.3 The review into grey fleet is likely to support reductions in carbon emissions, contributing to our climate change commitments.
- 6.4 Community impacts will be assessed as part of the peer review process and taken into account in the Board's recommendations.
- 6.5 In terms of any risks associated with redesign, the external audit report on the Council, reported separately to this meeting states that: 'The Redesign Board has made good progress and a clear way forward was approved in September 2017. This is ambitious but founded on solid principles that have worked well to date.' The work plan for the Board guides the Board's activities and this can adapt as required.

Date: 17.10.17

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