Cheshire East Council
Cheshire West and Chester Council

Shared Services Joint Committee

Date of Meeting: 17th March 2023

Report Title: The Future Model for ICT: Mobilisation Update

Senior Officer: Jane Burns, Executive Director, Corporate Services, Cheshire East Council.

Laurence Ainsworth, Director of Public Service Reform, Cheshire West and Chester Council.

1   Report Summary

1.1   This report provides a summary of the work underway to mobilise the Hybrid ICT programme following recent decisions to proceed with a new service model.

2   Recommendations

2.1   That the Shared Services Joint Committee note the latest update on the mobilisation phase of the programme.

3   Reasons for Recommendations

3.1   The Shared Service Joint Committee have agreed to receive regular updates on the progress of the programme to provide transparent oversight and accountability.

4   Background

4.1   Following comprehensive joint work by officers, on 26th January 2023 Shared Services Joint Committee recommended that their constituent councils proceed with a hybrid model for ICT. This involves retaining a shared network and data centre and a separation of other ICT functions that are currently shared. Each council has now taken this recommendation through their respective decision-making bodies. Shared Service Joint Committee will play a key role in providing oversight throughout the programme over the next two years. A reminder of the high-level programme plan is provided in Appendix 1.

4.2   A mobilisation workshop was held in February with senior officers across both councils to ensure the programme could rapidly move into action. This highly productive session covered principles to guide the programme, governance, and resourcing. In

addition, lessons learned from the Best for Business programme were further considered. A number of highlights are outlined below.

4.3   Key principles: 15 draft principles were identified that would guide the programme. Emphasis was made on collaboration, engagement, accountability and ensuring good levels of operational delivery are secured during and following the programme. These principles will remain reference points throughout the programme and are included in Appendix 2.

4.4   Governance: Both proposed Member governance and officer governance were discussed. For Members, it is envisaged that Shared Service Joint Committee will receive a report on the programme at each meeting with information presented in an accessible form. This will cover progress, resource, risks, and issues. In addition, discussion was held on establishing a joint scrutiny task group to hold Shared Service Joint Committee and the programme to account. The terms of reference will be agreed with Members and the group will be established in line with each council's governance processes.

4.5   The officer programme governance was also considered. A board jointly chaired by Executive Director of Corporate Services – Cheshire East and the Director of Public Service Reform - Cheshire West and Chester will be formed supported by a Programme Director and three workstreams covering Workforce, Technical Change and Design. The board will report into Shared Services Joint Committee.

4.6   Workstreams: The key areas for delivery under each workstream were discussed to provide clarity on major tasks. This has supported a shared understanding across both councils and will inform more detailed programme planning and resource considerations.

4.7   Resourcing: A process to engage a Programme Director was agreed. To ensure the right skills are in place a process will commence to secure an individual with the appropriate skills and experience to manage the programme. Emphasis was made that the technical programme management skills were needed but experience of driving a large-scale programme with multiple stakeholders was essential alongside a problem solving mindset. In addition, it was confirmed that dedicated resource will be secured for Human Resources and technical support. A partner will be commissioned for the technical workstream to create the new tenancy environments. A procurement process and specifications are currently being scoped.

4.8   Supporting the workforce: Both councils discussed the importance of engaging and supporting the workforce throughout the transitional period and beyond. In addition, dialogue with Trade Unions will be essential. Meetings will be arranged to define the best mechanisms for this dialogue with Trade Unions.

5 Next steps

5.1 The actions outlined above will be progressed at pace in line with the programme timescales. By June many of the mobilisation actions will have been completed and the programme will be nearly fully mobilised.

6 Implications of the Recommendations

6.1 *Legal Implications*
Discussion was held on legal support for the programme, particularly to support new contractual arrangement and the new shared service agreement.

6.2 *Finance Implications*
A £5.1m overall programme budget has been agreed, projected benefits are £2.67m combined, payback period is 4 years. Regular reports on programme finances will feature through Members governance as the programme progresses.

6.3 *Policy Implications*
The new hybrid model will be aligned to each councils' policies. Common ICT policies will be agreed for the retained shared service.

6.4 *Equality Implications*
There are no direct Equality implications at this stage.

6.5 *Human Resources Implications*
Implications for Human Resources will be managed by the workforce workstream and will be a critical part of the programme. Engagement with workforce will continue throughout the programme. In addition, a joint session with the Trade Unions will be planned for later in March and it is proposed this will become a regular working group.

6.6 *Risk Management Implications*
A full risk log is being formed and will be reported to Members of the Committee on a regular basis.

6.7 *Rural Communities Implications*
ICT supports all priorities and communities, and it is important that successful delivery of the service is achieved.

6.8 *Implications for Children & Young People/Cared for Children*
ICT supports all priorities and communities, and it is important that successful delivery of the service is achieved.

6.9 *Public Health Implications*
ICT supports all priorities and communities, and it is important that successful delivery of the service is achieved.

6.10   *Climate Change Implications*
ICT supports all priorities and communities, and it is important that successful delivery of the service is achieved.

6.11   *Ward Members Affected*
This report relates to Shared Services that operate across both CE and CWC, therefore all wards are affected in both Councils.

7   Access to Information

Documents are available for inspection at:

Cheshire East Democratic Services
Westfields, Middlewich Road
Sandbach
CW11 1HZ

or:

Cheshire West & Chester Democratic Services
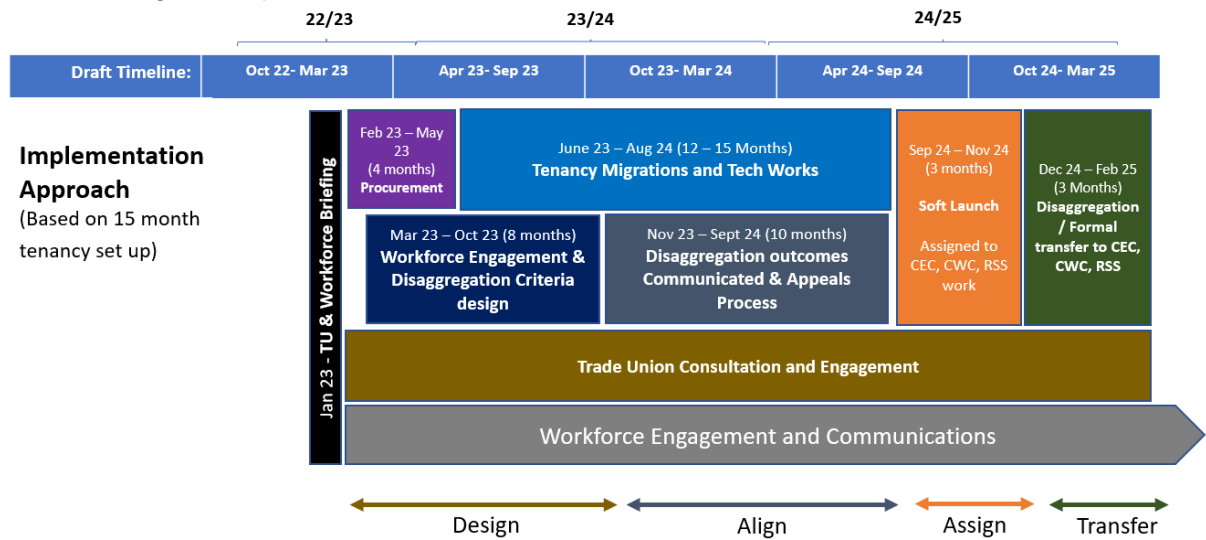HQ Building, Nicholas Street,
Chester,
CH1 2NP

8.   Contact Information

Any questions relating to this report should be directed to the following officer:

Name   Gareth Pawlett
Job Title   Chief Information Officer
E Mail   gareth.pawlett@cheshireeast.gov.uk

Name: Peter Lloyd
Job Title: Head of Transformation and Technology
Email: peter.lloyd@cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk

Appendix 1: High level plan

	22/23	23/24		24/25	
Draft Timeline:	Oct 22- Mar 23	Apr 23- Sep 23	Oct 23- Mar 24	Apr 24- Sep 24	Oct 24- Mar 25

Implementation Approach
(Based on 15 month tenancy set up)

Jan 23 - TU & Workforce Briefing

Feb 23 – May 23 (4 months) **Procurement**

June 23 – Aug 24 (12 – 15 Months) **Tenancy Migrations and Tech Works**

Mar 23 – Oct 23 (8 months) **Workforce Engagement & Disaggregation Criteria design**

Nov 23 – Sept 24 (10 months) **Disaggregation outcomes Communicated & Appeals Process**

Sep 24 – Nov 24 (3 months) **Soft Launch** Assigned to CEC, CWC, RSS work

Dec 24 – Feb 25 (3 Months) **Disaggregation / Formal transfer to CEC, CWC, RSS**

Trade Union Consultation and Engagement

Workforce Engagement and Communications

Design ← → Align ← → Assign ← → Transfer

Appendix 2 - Draft Principles

We will:

1. work closely with Members, supporting a clear understanding and keeping Members up to date on progress and challenges.
2. work together focussed on ensuring a successful transition to the new ICT models for both Councils.
3. will make joint decisions on material aspects of staffing and contractual commitments throughout the implementation of the new model.
4. share data and information on all aspects of the programme, which will be held in one place where all parties have access to the latest and most accurate version.
5. be transparent on costs and budgets and work together to provide greater multi-year budget certainty for all parties.
6. work in partnership to overcome challenges together regardless of if the challenge only effects one organisation.
7. acknowledge that the Councils are different and do things in different ways and we will need to find compromise at times.
8. recognise both parties have an equal stake in the successful delivery of the change
9. work as a partnership and trust in each other's ability to deliver, considering both councils need at all times.
10. strive to equally balance resources on the programme between each Council
11. ensure there is a fair and balanced transition of staff, skills and experience in line with our obligations.
12. put in place effective and pragmatic programme governance which will empower the programme team to deliver.
13. be clear on who is accountable for what aspects of the programme.
14. be realistic and focus on ensuring a successful of the Hybrid ICT Model rather than assign a Go Live date.
15. be solution focused, agile and ensure we have the tools to deliver from the start and we will recognise and share the success of key achievements through out the programme.