

Appendix 1 Workstream Updates

Best Service to Customers

Workstream Aim: By redesigning our customer access model, we will change the way we deliver our customer services, make better use of the customer insight we gather, deliver proactive customer services and make best use of digital services to make savings of: LOW £3.2m HIGH £4.65m (Strategic Business Case January 2023).

Workstream Senior Responsible Officer (SRO)	Jan Willis	Executive Director of Transformation and Resources
Workstream Lead	Chris Thompson	Director of Digital & IT
Workstream Sub-Leads	Paul Jones Sarah Green	Director of Environment and Transport Head of Customer Experience
Senior Project Manager	Natalie Copeland	Senior Project Manager BEST

Project	Project Aim	Achievements	Key Milestones	Outcomes
Digital Services to Customers - PlaceCube	A low-code platform for us to accelerate digital transformation. Helping us provide more services digitally	Cost of Living service went live on Beta site on 11th October 2023 (this included web feedback form) Registrars scheduled to go live 20th October and Public Health week commencing 23rd October 2023.	All content migrated from Kentico to PlaceCube – March 2024 First transactional Service live - December 2023	Giving our customers accessible, usable digital services so that they can easily transact with us digitally.
Customer Service Integration & Improvement	Integrating more services into the corporate contact centre will create capacity for service teams to deliver more complex work. It will enable a more joined up experience for customers that can have multiple queries across the organisation dealt with in the one place and create the data to support “a single view” of the customer.	OneCall, Enquiry Referral Coordinators (ERC's) and Revenues & Benefits all use the same telephony platform. Removal of Windows 12 server used to host the old telephony platform system used by OneCall and Enquiry Referral Coordinators).	OneCall and Enquiry Referral Coordinators (ERCs) live on Amazon Connect – 20 th September 2023	Fit for purpose telephony platform to improve functionality for users and customers. Decommissioning of a Windows 12 server to support in the wider aim of maintaining Payment Card Industry Data Security Standard (PCI DSS). Support with a single view of our customers.

The following projects within the Best Service to Customers workstream require support from the BEST Delivery Partner and have not yet commenced:

Customer Target Access Model & Strategy – We will develop a new customer service strategy and access model that helps focus on delivering services through the right channel at the right time.

Customer Insight - We will use data to allow us to better understand the needs of our customers, which in turn, may help us design improved services. We will develop tools to measure customer satisfaction in real time and enable us to recognise customer frustrations and immediately react to them.

Delivering Pro-active Customer Services - We will identify opportunities to co-locate complimentary services and re-model customer experience delivery. We will also look at our approach to digital inclusion and skills, hosting events to reduce demand and upskill residents.

Digital Services to Customers: Automating end-to-end processes and Paperless – We will support with the prioritisation, delivery, and acceleration of the work within the existing Digital & IT Service to automate end-to-end customer journeys and deliver user-centred, accessible digital services that delight and empower our users.

Best Use of Technology

Workstream Aim: By investing in our ability to design and build our own technology solutions, we will reduce the complexity of our technical architecture and make savings of: LOW £500k HIGH £1m (Strategic Business Case January 2023).

Workstream Senior Responsible Officer (SRO)	Jan Willis	Executive Director of Transformation and Resources
Workstream Lead	Chris Thompson	Director of Digital & IT
Senior Project Manager	Natalie Copeland	Senior Project Manager BEST

Project	Project Aim	Achievements	Key Milestones	Outcomes
FixMyStreet	A platform that allows residents to report public realm issues and get updates on progress	Implemented by May AGM 2023 – ongoing improvements as we respond to feedback. 14,329 reports received from 3 rd May 2023 to 17 th October 2023. As a comparison, we received an average of 18,559 in 2021 & 2022.	Go Live – 5 th May 2023 Lean Process Mapping recommendations from Service Review Team – December 2023	Improve the online offer for customers to report public realm issues (e.g., potholes, street lighting) Improved understanding and visibility of issues to allow more efficient service delivery. Customers can track progress improving satisfaction and reducing requirement to make follow up calls.
GIS	Helping us to build our data literacy and capability to	59 users moved to the new system (ArcGIS Online), 79 staff have been trained.	Launched GIS Community SharePoint - August 23	Replaced old GIS system with a new web-based solution.

	become more data driven.	<p>Launched GIS Community SharePoint site – 259 members to date.</p> <p>GIS Developer & GIS Engineer appointed to support with transfer to BAU</p>	<p>GIS Developer & GIS engineer appointed – September 2023</p> <p>Partner, Atkins, to handover from Project into Business as usual – by December 2023.</p>	Building a self-sufficient GIS Community
Modern.Gov	A platform to provide paperless management and publication of democratic papers and approvals	<p>Implemented Cabinet and all other committee workflows within Modern.Gov</p> <p>29 workflows are live in the system to date.</p> <p>356 staff are registered to use the system.</p>	<p>Phase 1 (Cabinet workflow) live - September 2023</p> <p>Phase 2 (All other committee workflows) live - October 2023</p> <p>Phase 3 (Explore and implement additional functions and paper lite meetings) by 31st May 2024 with go-live date planned for AGM.</p>	<p>Streamlining the process of publishing papers.</p> <p>Improving governance and auditability of decision making and papers.</p> <p>Staff and members have access to modern technology that enable them to work effectively and securely</p>
Smarter Procurement & Device Management (Desktop Refresh, DTR)	Provide modern, reliable, and mobile computing devices for all our users	Hardware and software requirements collected from majority of users in scope using actionable email.	1665 devices replaced by April 2024	<p>Staff and members have access to modern devices that enable them to work effectively and securely.</p> <p>Laptops issued to staff without the need for manual configuration by the Digital & IT Service Desk.</p>
iCasework	Provide a case management platform for corporate feedback and information governance requests	Soft Launch of Information Governance Request (Freedom of Information FOI, Environment Information Regulation EIR, Subject Access Request SARs) in October 2023.	<p>2nd October 2023– System used for Information Governance Requests</p> <p>1st November 2023– system used for corporate feedback, statutory complaints for</p>	<p>Keep documents and correspondence within one system (more efficient case handling)</p> <p>Automated templates to ensure</p>

			Adult's and Children's, Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman and Housing Ombudsman cases 21 st November 2023 – Report training	consistency with responses. Capture and analyse feedback to give us better insight into our customer needs and use this to provide a better customer experience
M365 E5 Licensing	Provide a licensing model that enables staff to use modern tools to do their role	1.Replaced our existing virtual private network (VPN) tool from Prisma Global Protect to Always-on-VPN - May 2023 2.Windows AutoPilot – key enabler to commence Smarter Procurement & Device Management (Desktop Refresh, DTR) Project 3.Enhanced Security and Compliance tools are available (data loss prevention, conditional access, and document management controls). This is a key enabler for the Information Architecture Project.	Replacement of VPN – May 2023 Windows AutoPilot available – October 2022 Enhanced Security & Compliance Tools available – October 2022.	Implementation of tools available to us within Microsoft 365 product to reduce the third-party contract costs with suppliers providing the same tools. This enables a smarter way of working for the Digital & IT Service Desk, meaning the new device roll out will be seamless and smooth. 5,669 desk-based staff can access installed versions of the office applications rather than limited cloud versions
Oracle Improvement & Optimisation	A programme of work to review our enterprise resource platform to see where we can make improvements for users	Business case drafted for Cloud Absence & Pension Changes	Seeded functionality for absence and leave implemented by August 2024 Oracle contract renewal – November 2024	Improvements enhance users' experience, deliver automation, and mitigate system failure risks.
Labman	Replacement of a legacy laboratory management testing system	Scope of work clearly defined	Commence in-house build of proof-of-concept in Microsoft 365 – October 2023.	A laboratory management testing system that is fit for purpose and

			UKAS recertification visit Feb 2024	secure. Staff have technology that enables them to work effectively and securely. Continuous attainment of the UKAS Accreditation
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The following projects within the Best Use of Technology workstream require support from the BEST Delivery Partner and have not yet commenced:

Fit for Purpose Digital & IT Staffing Structure – We will support with the independent review and validation of a proposed structure for the Digital & IT Service

Streamlined Technical Architecture – We will review the technology estate to establish the current position and future needs. We will use this to develop a rationalisation plan and embedding a governance process to embed longer-term decision making through the creation of a Technical Design Authority.

Information Architecture – We will support the implementation of a more intuitive way to discover documents and ensure permissions are simpler to manage.

Service Desk Management Tool – We will provide a tool so staff can self-serve routine requests covering Finance, HR, and IT matters.

Best in Class Commissioning and Communities First

Workstream Aim : By introducing a new commissioning framework underpinned by a category management approach, and co-designing more services through a Communities First ethos, we'll improve the quality of public services in Northumberland, involve more people in how they are designed and delivered, and manage our spend with suppliers more commercially to make savings of: LOW £5m HIGH £21m (Strategic Business Case January 2023).

Current Savings Achieved: £1.63m in Q1/Q2 2023/24

Workstream Senior Responsible Officer (SRO)	Gill O'Neill	Executive Director of Public Health, Inequalities, and Stronger Communities
Workstream Lead	Pam Hindhaugh Nigel Walsh	Head of Corporate Commissioning and Procurement Director of Stronger Communities
Senior Project Manager	Jackie Woods Mark Robertson	Senior Project Manager BEST (Commissioning) Senior Project Manager BEST (Communities First)

Project	Project Aim	Achievements	Key Milestones	Outcomes
Reduce Third Party Spend	By focusing on rationalising addressable third party spend through better consolidation of	1.An opportunity assessment tool, Atamis, went live, which will support analysis, opportunity	Completed analysis of agency spend and post and print.	Identified opportunities to be explored in Service Reviews

	contracts and/or renegotiation of prices.	assessment and understanding of spend in NCC. 2.Post and Print Service Review complete. 3.Review of agency spend underway	Action plan to reduce spend in post and print developed. Action plan to reduce agency spend developed.	TBC TBC
Implement a Contract Management Framework	A robust Contract Management Framework ensures that cost reductions remain locked in during the lifetime of contracts and suppliers deliver ongoing value	1.Corporate Contract and Supplier Relationship Manager recruited. 2.Social Value and Responsible Procurement Manager recruited.	New contract management arrangements implemented with services. Northumberland Supplier Engagement event (Mar 24)	Contract benefits and cashable savings fully realised. Promote local business and retain £ spend in Northumberland. Develop new and existing suppliers. Encourage local suppliers to work collaboratively. Support social value and community wealth building.
Communities First		Four workshops held with partners from across health, VCFSE sector, ASC, Customer Services and Fire & Rescue to understand 'as is' state, and support in the co-design of a future state model to divert referrals from ASC to community provision. Workshop four looking at future state (Nov 23)	Communities First development model to be presented to SLT Nov '23	TBC. Aim is to develop pilot areas to test approach to preventative measures, developing community activity and referral routes to prevent escalation to ASC services.
Reduced		1.Service Review of	Service Review of	

<p>Demand for Homecare</p>		<p>Direct Payments completed Mar 23</p> <p>2.Second stage project under way, implementing recommendations</p>	<p>Direct Payments, with recommendations.</p> <p>Training offer for ASC staff reviewed.</p> <p>More engagement with VCSFE sector and Northumberland Communities Together</p>	<p>Direct Payments training added as 'Required Learning.'</p> <p>Attendance at Communities First workshops and increased liaison with Communities Together to promote Direct Payments as a care route.</p>
<p>Reduced Demand for High-Cost Independent Living Placements</p>		<p>1.Three workshops have taken place with staff from across Adult Social Care around developing co-design and participation opportunities for service users.</p> <p>2. Supporting the development of Service User and Carer engagement in the Shared Lives service and developing story boards to be delivered as part of the marketing campaign to promote the service</p>	<p>Individual service delivery sites have used tools to engage with service users.</p> <p>Video packages being developed to promote Shared Lives as both a referral route for ASC clients and to attract more Carers to the service</p>	<p>Service Users will have increased opportunity to influence service provision.</p> <p>Support for evidence-building within future CQC inspections</p> <p>There will be more opportunities for Service Users to access Shared Lives as a service.</p>
<p>Community Asset Transfers – Leisure Sites</p>		<p>Expression of Interest work ongoing around five sites across the County, with positive engagement and comms across a number of partner agencies.</p>	<p>Report taken to SLT 7th Nov, with formal decision to be taken by Cabinet on 12th December</p>	<p>CAT process to be completed by end of financial year.</p>

The following projects within the Best in Class Commissioning and Communities First workstream require support from the BEST Delivery Partner and have not yet commenced:

Implement a Category Management Framework - Category Management is a strategic approach to procurement, taking the council's existing, fragmented spend and organising it into

common groups called 'categories' enabling better management of spend and better relationships with the market.

Implement a Commissioning Framework - A new Commissioning Framework will provide a strategic approach to commissioning; a robust and commercially minded methodology to ensuring that good outcomes, value for money and social value are achieved from all decisions to spend money with third parties.

Implement a Networked Model of Commissioning - A networked model of commissioning supporting effective and collaborative working will be in place for staff in relevant roles (commissioning, procurement, and contract management).

Best Use of Resources

By re-organising the Council's structures, reducing bureaucracy, and managing internal demand, the Council can create clearer career pathways for its staff, a better employee and customer experience and make savings of: LOW £1.975 million HIGH £3.25 million (Strategic Business Case January 2023).

Workstream Senior Responsible Officer (SRO)	Neil Bradley	Executive Director of Adults, Ageing and Wellbeing
Workstream Lead	Alison Elsdon	Director of Finance and Procurement
Senior Project Manager	Jackie Woods	Senior Project Manager BEST

Project	Project Aim	Achievements	Key Milestones	Outcomes
Develop a Streamlined Operating Framework	A leaner operating framework will streamline processes, make it easier for council staff to get things done for customers and strip out unnecessary bureaucracy.	1. On-line form for insurance claims developed for customers and staff. 2. Developed more proactive process for renewal of concessionary travel and blue badges.	On-line claim form launched (Nov 23). Test and launch of new process. Obtain feedback from Customers and the Customer Service team.	Customers and staff can log insurance claims electronically, directly. Customers are contacted in advance of their travel pass expiring, wherever possible, and renewed immediately when required.
Develop a Transactions Hub for Employees	The Transactions Hub will make it easier for employees and managers to self-serve by providing better information, self-help guides and resources on our intranet, building more digital services and	1. Electronic Timesheets solution launched to staff. 2. Accounts Payable electronic order pad launched for schools.	Solution developed, tested, then launched. Further development to improve compatibility with mobile devices (TBC) Form developed and tested, signed off by Audit and launched to	Staff can update their timesheets electronically at a time and place which suits them. Schools can now place orders electronically.

	automating processes to make working life easier.		schools	
Develop an Employee Service Centre	A new Employee Service Centre(s) will provide a single point of access to all staff involved in delivering the council's high volume, enabler Transactional Services, providing a channel for all routine requests for Finance, HR, ICT and Procurement.	Planning in progress		
Implement a New Operating Model in Finance, HR, and ICT	Develop and implement a new operating model for enabler services with roles focused on Business Partners, Performance and Insight, and Centres of Expertise, providing clarity and consistency to the level of support provided to frontline services	Planning in progress		

The following project within the Best Use of Resources workstream requires support from the BEST Delivery Partner and has not yet commenced:

Implement a Corporate Business Support Centre of Excellence - By bringing staff involved in general administrative functions together into (a) Business Support function(s), the council can make efficiencies through economies of scale, while creating clearer career pathways for support staff and reducing the cost of providing services for taxpayers

Best Talent & Opportunities

By transforming our workforce to reflect the needs of a modern local authority, we will support the implementation of this business case and be best placed to deliver the council's strategic priorities. We will create opportunities that attract the best talent to Northumberland and give people great reasons to stay.

The key focus of this workstream is to support and develop our staff, to grow and retain talent within the Council and to support a positive culture. Cashable savings benefits are not expected to be achieved from the delivery of BEST Talent and Opportunities workstream projects.

Workstream Senior Responsible Officer (SRO)	Simon Neilson	Executive Director of Place and Regeneration
Workstream Lead	Sarah Farrell	Director of Workforce and Organisational Development
Senior Project Manager	Isobel Nicholson	Senior Project Manager BEST

Project	Project Aim	Achievements	Key Milestones	Outcomes
Values and Behaviours	Launch and embed new values and behaviours.	New values and behaviours brand and graphics have been developed. Values & Behaviours pages released on 'The Beat'	New values and behaviours brand and graphics launched	New values and behaviours are recognised by staff and become embedded in NCC culture
Coaching and Mentoring	Development of Coaching and Mentoring support for staff	Service Review completed, the outcomes and recommendations from which provide the evidence base for change and improvement.	Development of an Options Appraisal for providing coaching and mentoring support for staff	The creation of a 'coaching' culture within the Council Improved quality of Coaching and Mentoring offer
Leadership Framework	Development of a Leadership Framework	Commitment to continue Living Leader Programme	Continued roll out of the Living Leader Programme to staff at all levels.	Develop our people and establish a common language for change
Reward and Recognition	Development of a Reward and Recognition Strategy and the review of Pay, Benefit, Terms and Conditions	Planning in progress		
Talent MAD	Acquisition, Management and Development of talent within Northumberland County Council	Planning in progress		

The following project within the Best Talent and Opportunities workstream requires support from the BEST Delivery Partner and has not yet commenced:

Workforce Blueprint – Create a new workforce blueprint that will rationalise our 1,000+ job descriptions to around 150 role profiles, grouped into 'job families', based on the roles that people perform and what those roles have in common, and not on the organisational structure.

Best Use of Assets

By better managing our assets through a corporate landlord approach we will reduce the size of our property estate to deliver capital receipts and reduce how much we spend on maintaining buildings. A better approach to facilities management and planned maintenance will make savings of £2m (Strategic Business Case January 2023).

Workstream Senior Responsible Officer (SRO)	Simon Neilson	Executive Director of Place and Regeneration
Workstream Lead	Rob Murfin	Director of Housing and Planning
Senior Project Manager	Mark Robertson	Senior Project Manager BEST

Project	Achievements	Key Milestones	Outcomes
Estates Review	<p>1. Depot Review complete, with final report going initially to SLT 7th Nov.</p> <p>2. Estates Plan scope in place to enable development of Estates Plan project.</p> <p>3. Community Asset Transfer review and update</p>	<p>Report to SLT – Nov 23</p> <p>Agreed principles and approach to wider Estates Review. Agreement around resourcing needed to undertake the review.</p> <p>CAT policy revised for future use</p>	<p>Recommendations in place around maintenance and/or siting of Depot Facilities</p> <p>The Estates Plan will offer the following outcomes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identification of potential property savings • Reduced carbon footprint. • Smaller Estate of better quality accommodation <p>CAT policy up to date, and in line with Corporate Priorities, to be used where required following Estates Review</p>
Integrated Services	A review of Integrated Services, which includes Facilities Management, Statutory and Planned Maintenance and Capital Delivery has been initiated.	Review of Council DLO	
WorkSmart Review	Review of WorkSmart has been undertaken, focusing on	Final recommendations presented back to Workstream Board 23 rd	Recommendations will form part of basis for Estates Planning in terms of office space make up and space requirements,

	County Hall.	October	
Corporate Landlord	Not yet commenced, awaiting outcome of Estates Plan scope and Integrated Services Review		

Best Value for Money

By introducing a more rigorous approach to planning and performance management, and performing Deep Dive reviews into specific service areas, we will achieve better outcomes for customers while reducing demand on higher cost public services to make savings of: LOW £1.88m HIGH £2.68m (Strategic Business Case January 2023).

Workstream Senior Responsible Officer (SRO)	Audrey Kingham	Executive Director of Children, Young People and Education
Workstream Lead	Jon Lawler	Public Health Consultant
Workstream Sub-Lead	Kelly Gardner	Director of Strategic Change and Service Improvement
Senior Project Manager	Mark Robertson	Senior Project Manager BEST

Project	Achievements	Key Milestones	Outcomes
Planning, Performance and Accountability Framework	New iterative Service Plan completed at Service Director	complete	One corporate approach to Performance Planning and Accountability established with a clear thread throughout NCC from service planning to individual appraisal-
	Corporate Service Plan template completed by all Directors (already reviewing for 2024)	Complete (2 outstanding)	
	Head of Service key priority template ready for completion	On track	
	Planning and Performance Accountability Framework complete	Complete	
	Suite of corporate documents sharing the approaches for Northumberland complete.	On track	
	Head of Service priorities template ready to issue	On track	

Value for Money Baseline Tool	Value for Money Assessment draft template under review – plan to align with business partner areas of focus	In development To be piloted with by 3 or 4 service areas before full roll out across all council services	All council services will have a baseline against which internal progress can be measured. Deep dives/ service reviews can be prioritised ensuring greatest impact.
Data and BI strategy	Strategy in draft format Data Academy proposal developed and launched	On track Suitable staff members engaged in training. First cohort to commence – Nov 23 First cohort completion – Dec 24	Co produced work from data leaders across NCC Staff across the organisation are equipped with the skills to make faster data-informed decisions.
Home to School Transport Review	The individual deep dives are now coherent within one overall project with the Best VFM workstream where tracking, progress and codependent decisions can make progress 1.Transformation Fund accessed to support development of Independent Travel Trainers proof of concept project. Jobs out to advert at present. 2.Engagement work ongoing with parent carers regarding the potential for developing Enhanced Personal Budgets to enable them to organise or deliver their own home to school transport arrangements.	ITT staff in post – by Dec 23 Feasibility decision Dec 23 around potential for Enhanced Personal Budgets for families of SEND children and young people to make their own arrangements for Home to School Transport Business Case Development for Devolved Transport Budgets (Nov 23)	Singular conversation supporting the review process. Increased independence for SEND children and young people in relation to transport. Increased opportunities for families to make their own arrangements for Home to School Transport

	<p>3. Discussions with two school sites regarding piloting Devolved School Transport Budgets.</p> <p>4. Project implemented to deliver recommendations of Home to School transport proposals re: service integration of School Transport and School Admissions processes</p> <p>5. Deep Dive review of contracting arrangements and finance in flight</p>	<p>Transport Management System live Dec 23</p> <p>In progress</p>	<p>Devolved School budgets allowing greater flexibility for schools able to make their own Transport arrangements.</p> <p>Recommendations to influence contracting arrangements April 2024 Service Integration and clear responsibilities. Increased efficiency via TMS system. SEND representation in policy</p>
Local Services Service Review	<p>Scope of the review to be completed – expect this to consider</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Depot review b. Operating model and approaches c. Organisational structure 	TBC	TBC
Safety and Enforcement Service Review	<p>Bring together three separate review aspects to have a singular conversation and consider decision that may be codependent upon one another</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Corporate Health and Safety • Enforcement • Community Safety 	Nov 9 th initial meeting to review work to date and inform future planning	