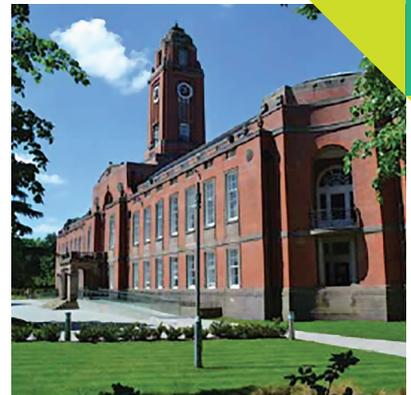


LOCAL PARTNERSHIPS

The public sector delivery specialists

CASE STUDY

Reshaping Trafford – council-wide transformation



Local Partnerships worked with Trafford Council to deliver intensive external assurance reviews to help ensure their council-wide transformation programme 'Reshaping Trafford' stayed on track and set to deliver

Background

Like most other councils in England, Trafford is facing unprecedented pressures. Demand for services is increasing whilst financial support from central government is decreasing. In addition, major policy initiatives such as Public Service Reform and the Care Act are making new demands of an already stretched organisation. The council needs to save more than 40 per cent per annum of their net operating budget. However, it is determined that Trafford as a place will not be defined by austerity and public expenditure cuts.

Over the last few years, most services have been restructured and downsized making it more difficult each year to identify significant efficiency savings. The Reshaping Trafford Programme is an ambitious, council-wide transformation initiative, established to deliver savings whilst continuing to provide services through innovation.



“Trafford Council needs to find savings of over £55 million over the next three years – this is in addition to a similar amount already saved over the last three. In this challenging context, the opportunity to pause, think, reflect and learn as part of a structured review process with Local Partnerships has been invaluable.”

Wendy Marston, Corporate Director Transformation and Resources,
Trafford Council

The vision is for a mix of different delivery models. Most will be delivered by others, and some will continue to be funded and monitored for quality by the much smaller council that will remain. Some of the non-statutory services the council currently provides will no longer exist or will be run by other organisations or volunteers.

Trafford's key challenges

1. Responding to rising demand and to the Public Sector Reform agenda

Trafford, like all councils, needs to manage the predicted rise in demand across both adults' and children's social care. Unless there is a reduction in demand and a radical rethink as to how these services will be provided in the future, it will be unable to meet its statutory requirements.

Trafford's response is to establish the Early Intervention and Wellbeing Hub. This will take existing public sector reform models and broaden them, beyond those with complex dependencies, to include the population of Trafford in general.

2. Delivering significant savings whilst minimising the effect on service delivery

Trafford's response is to establish a joint venture with the private sector to deliver environment and highway services and an estimated 20 per cent savings on the current cost. In addition it is undertaking a review to determine the council's mandatory requirements for each of the services it provides and conducting a detailed analysis on cost, activity and value, including benchmarking to develop a three-year financial plan.

This will recommend the services the council will prioritise, exit from or reduce to a core minimum.

3. Reducing funding for discretionary services while maximising the benefits from existing ones and finding a sustainable solution to support sport, leisure and recreation, arts and culture and library services

Trafford's response is to explore various innovative trading options, building on the success of its Leisure Trust.

4. Generating additional income by developing services which are attractive to a wider market

Trafford's response is to create a separate independent company to trade across a range of corporate and back-office services.

5. Delivering the Reshaping Trafford Programme to time and budget without adversely impacting the day-to-day provision of services

Trafford's response is to ensure robust corporate oversight and governance, including working with Local Partnerships to provide external assurance and help build internal capability.



Local Partnerships' support

Much of Trafford's transformation work is innovative and in some areas there are limited successful precedents to draw from. Our assurance approach ensured an external independent, objective view of the programme.

We worked closely with Trafford's project team to undertake two assurance reviews.

1. Strategic review of the Reshaping Trafford Programme – focusing on the council's arrangements for leading, managing and monitoring the programme as a whole to ensure it was in a healthy state to deliver the change

Our recommendations included:

- ▶ clarifying the scope of the programme and its individual constituent projects and how savings targets are attributed to specific areas
- ▶ improving the relationships and interfaces between the programme (and its projects) and the wider community
- ▶ the need for a more systematic approach to considering some of the commercial options.

2. Gateway review of the technology and business change project

Our recommendations included:

- ▶ a series of suggestions for improving project governance, resourcing and supplier engagement.

Outcomes

As a result of the reviews, the council feels that the Reshaping Trafford Programme is better placed to move forward with confidence to deliver the transformation and savings that Trafford is seeking.

Specifically, the programme sponsor and team felt the assurance programme provided:

- ▶ **added value** – the opportunity to step back and reflect on the programme to prevent wasted effort in some areas – saving money and delivering benefits earlier
- ▶ **confidence** – the timing of the strategic review proved particularly helpful at this early stage of the programme to ensure it is on the right track early
- ▶ **objectivity** – the external perspective was critical in providing ‘distance’ and the opportunity for stakeholders to provide candid feedback.

“ The benefits substantially outweigh the cost. We will be looking to carry out further work with Local Partnerships as we push forward with our Reshaping Trafford Programme.”

Sarah Maynard, Programme Manager, Reshaping Trafford Programme, Trafford Council

Contact

Find out more about the wider lessons learned from council-wide transformation programmes, how an assurance review could help you, or how we could support you in other areas of your work.

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