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***Neighbourhood Services and  
Community Involvement Scrutiny  
Commission***

***Using Buildings  
Better (UBB)  
overview***

Lead director: Miranda Cannon

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## Useful information

- Ward(s) affected: All
- Report author: Miranda Cannon
- Author contact details: 454 0102
- Report version number: 0.1

### 1. Purpose of report

This report provides an overview of the Using Buildings Better (UBB) programme.

## 2. Briefing

### 2.1 Introduction

The UBB programme was established in late 2015. The main focus is on the Council's operational estate (i.e. the buildings the Council uses to deliver services) excluding schools. The types of buildings in-scope are:

- Depots, stores and workshops
- Community and neighbourhood Centres
- Libraries
- Customer service centres
- Children, young people and family centres
- Housing offices
- Youth centres
- Adult education centres
- Administrative buildings
- Training centres eg Forest Lodge
- Sport and Leisure centres
- Parks buildings and facilities

The scope covers around 250 operational buildings in total.

### 2.2 Vision for the programme

The vision for the programme is to:

*Operate in future with fewer, higher quality operational buildings which support effective, efficient and joined-up service delivery and ways of working.*

*To invest where appropriate to enable a range of benefits including financial savings, support for economic growth, reduced carbon emissions, and improved customer experience and service access.*

*To deliver this based on a positive process of community, councillor, staff, trade union and partner engagement.*

The programme is designed to focus on service needs and delivery over retention of specific buildings with early consideration of options for reuse or disposal of buildings. It has the potential to impact on all Leicester City Council non-schools based staff in some way. As part of the programme co-location with partners will be considered where benefits are evident and can be practically achieved within reasonable timescales.

### **2.3 Programme governance:**

The programme involves six work-streams and a summary of these is set out in section 2.4 below.

Each work-stream has a clear governance structure involving a lead Director, Project Manager and a Project Board. The Programme Director for the overall programme is Miranda Cannon. Appendix 1 sets out a governance structure chart and there is a second chart showing the key individuals involved in delivery of the programme.

The work-streams all report into the UBB Programme Board chaired by Andy Keeling and which is attended by all Strategic Directors or their representative, plus the Director of Investment, Director of Finance and Miranda Cannon as Programme Director.

There is communications support to the programme from the Communications and Marketing Team. Monthly meetings are held at a programme management level bringing all work-stream Project Managers together with the Programme Director and with relevant disciplines including Facilities Management, HR, ICT and Finance to ensure that all staffing, resource and other implications are considered. There are also monthly update meetings for Trade Unions.

Each work-stream is responsible for ensuring that decisions are formally taken at the appropriate points via the formal Executive decision making route and with the involvement of the relevant scrutiny commission. As part of this decision making process there should be clear identification of costs and savings and other benefits arising which will then be tracked overall through the programme management arrangements.

### **2.4 Programme scope and delivery**

#### **2.4.1 Rationalisation of depots, workshops and stores**

**Project Director:** Frank Jordan

**Project Manager:** Phil Davison

This work-stream focuses on how 35 depot sites across the city can be rationalised. Some of these depots are primarily stores or workshops, and others are depots with staff based there. The depots cover a range of service areas, namely Parks and Open Spaces, Housing, City Cleansing, Transport Fleet, Cemeteries and Crematoria. Some are used for the purpose of storing supplies for repairs and maintenance of properties, roads and fleet. Others are used as workshops to support repairs functions, for the storage of fleet vehicles including specialist vehicles used in the upkeep of parks and open spaces for example, and as bases for craft workers and other staff.

In the first phase of the work an initial 8 sites have been identified and agreed for early disposal and these are listed in appendix 2. These have been identified as readily surplus to requirements and disposal will have little impact on service delivery and negligible impact on staff.

The second phase of the review is working on identifying depots that are not a strategic priority for future service delivery, not in the right locations and not fully utilised as depots, and will propose a future model which rationalises further the remaining 27 depots. This will be developed into a business case for approval in late summer / early Autumn.

This project is being delivered as part of the wider Technical Services spending review programme which is also managed by the same Project Director and Project Manager. This is important because the rationalisation of depots has close dependencies with the work being undertaken within Technical Services, particularly the review of stores provision and work to review planned and reactive maintenance.

## **2.4.2 Transforming neighbourhood services (TNS)**

**Project Director:** John Leach

**Project Manager:** Adrian Wills and Lee Warner

The TNS work that was already underway has been brought into the scope of the UBB programme to ensure that linkages are made with other aspects of building usage such as staff accommodation and also with channel shift (see below). As well as inclusion in UBB, at the same time the scope of TNS expanded to formally include Youth Services so that the scope is now Neighbourhood Services (Community Centres and activities, Libraries, Adult Skills and Learning), Housing, and Youth Services.

Decisions have already been taken for the South, West and North West areas of TNS. Implementation of changes is complete in some areas and still underway in others. Appendix 3 outlines the outcomes in relation to buildings to date.

The first phase of engagement work has now commenced as of 6<sup>th</sup> June for the North East area. This will be followed by a second phase of engagement on specific proposals in September, with the aim of taking a formal decision in October 2016. This will be followed by the final phase of the programme commencing around that time in East and Central areas.

There is a particularly close link between the TNS work and the Customer Services and Channel Shift work. In the multi-service centres such as Pork Pie Library and in due course at New Parks and Beaumont Leys Libraries we will be looking to make provision for self-service facilities such as self-serve payment machines and PCs to access on-line services as well as phone facilities to speak to a customer service line advisor.

### **2.4.3 Early help (health and children's) remodelling of service delivery**

**Project Director:** Frances Craven

**Project Manager:** Jackie Difolco / Nick Furini

This work-stream is focused on the remodelling of Early Help Targeted services which may have implications in terms of future use of Children, Young People and Family Centres in the city. The remodelling is also likely to explore options for delivering some early help services in other Council buildings such as multi-service centres. The Project Director therefore also sits on the TNS Project Board to help ensure these links are made.

### **2.4.4 Office accommodation**

**Project Director:** Alison Greenhill

**Project Manager:** Lorna Simpson

This work-stream is reviewing all of our staff accommodation, particularly those buildings which are non-customer facing. The most recent focus has been on the move of staff out of Greyfriars which is nearing completion. Adult Social Care staff have already relocated from there to Bosworth House, the Records Team are moving to the Town Hall and Children's Social Care staff are moving over the next two weeks. The Greyfriars, St Martin's and Conway Buildings are therefore scheduled to close on 22<sup>nd</sup> June and disposal plans are currently being developed.

In conjunction with TNS there has been work to identify how we can make more efficient use of the staff accommodation on the first floor of Beaumont Way and plans have been agreed.

Work has also taken place in conjunction with a significant staffing review across Adult Social Care to help locate teams together. The East Locality team is being brought together into the Merlyn Vaz centre from Sulgrave Road and Preston Lodge. The West locality team will move into Beaumont Way and therefore releasing Thurcaston Road which will then be available for disposal. The Learning Disability team have been located together at Sovereign House. Staff from Lincoln Street have been relocated on a temporary basis to the Rowans, and Lincoln Street has recently been disposed of via auction.

Work is currently underway to prioritise the next buildings that will be looked at with a view to consolidation and disposal where possible.

### **2.4.5 Channel shift**

**Project Director:** Miranda Cannon

**Project Manager:** Caroline Jackson

Customer expectations are changing both nationally and locally in terms of how they wish to interact with us. We know nationally 87% of adults are accessing the internet, of these 66% are doing so using a smartphone. Here at Leicester we are ten years behind customer interaction expectations.

Channel shift is about moving as much customer contact away from expensive face to face and telephony channels as possible. In doing so improving service standards and

the user experience, and protecting a core face to face service for those who really need it.

The vision for customer access is a one council approach 'One Council, One contact' delivered through:

- One Contact Centre and digital hubs
- One golden contact number
- One customer (service) website portal

The benefits this investment will achieve are a cost reduction in overall customer contact, improved customer experience through greater access to service transactions and choice of how to interact with us. This will increase cost effective contact transaction and customer satisfaction and maximise income.

There is an integral link with the use of buildings and hence why the channel shift work-stream is included in the UBB programme. In particular as referred to in relation to TNS, we are identifying where the digital hubs in neighbourhoods should be located in conjunction with the delivery of multi-service centres as part of TNS. The channel shift programme has also supported the staff accommodation moves in relation to our city centre locations with the consolidation of all city centre customer service facing locations at Granby Street.

The focus to date for the project has included the procurement and implementation of a replacement CRM system which went live on 2 March 2016. The first digital hub was operational in December 2015 at Pork Pie Community Hub & Library, and the city centre customer service consolidation in the city centre is concluding with the final element being the move out of Greyfriars. Payment transactions at Granby Street are now 100% self-service. A range of other channel shift projects are underway as well as a focus on the implementation of the one customer (service) website portal later this year.

#### **2.4.6 Disposal of surplus assets**

**Project Director:** Frank Jordan

**Project Manager:** Phil Davison

This is a reactive work-stream which runs alongside and responds to the decisions taken in other workstreams. It supports the appraisal of disposal options in relation to buildings in each work-stream as appropriate, and co-ordinates the disposal of those assets that become surplus. Disposal routes include all for example sale, demolition and subsequent sale or development, housing development, provision of school places and community asset transfer.

There has been a focus at the outset on tightening up the process by which disposals are managed and to ensure that all relevant aspects are properly considered including for example facilities management and ICT infrastructure in existing buildings identified for disposal.

#### **2.5 Programme Benefits**

The programme is aiming to deliver a number of specific benefits as follows:

Description of Benefit	Contributing workstreams
Reduction in number of LCC operational buildings	TNS/ Depots, workshops & Stores/ Office accommodation/ Early Help service remodelling / Disposal of surplus assets
Release of sites for business investment and value to economy	TNS/ Depots, workshops & Stores/ Office accommodation/ Early Help service remodelling / Disposal of surplus assets
Release of sites for housing and increase in total housing yield	TNS/ Depots, workshops & Stores/ Office accommodation/ Early Help service remodelling / Disposal of surplus assets
Transfer of sites to LCC commercial portfolio and increased yield	TNS/ Depots, workshops & Stores/ Office accommodation/ Early Help service remodelling / Disposal of surplus assets
Number of community asset transfers achieved	TNS/ Depots, workshops & Stores / Early Help service remodelling / Disposal of surplus assets
Release of sites for school place provision and increase in total school places available	TNS/ Depots, workshops & Stores/ Office accommodation/ Early Help service remodelling / Disposal of surplus assets
Revenue savings including Housing Revenue Account savings	TNS/ Depots, workshops & Stores/ Office accommodation/ Early Help service remodelling / Channel Shift / Disposal of surplus assets
Total value of capital receipts	TNS/ Depots, workshops & Stores/ Office accommodation/ Early Help service remodelling / Disposal of surplus assets
Reduction in staff accommodation footprint i.e. per m2 per employee	Office accommodation / Disposal of surplus assets
Increased staff:desk ratio demonstrating a more efficient use of available space	Office accommodation / Disposal of surplus assets
Reduction in maintenance backlog and reactive vis a vis proactive maintenance	TNS/ Depots, workshops & Stores/ Office accommodation/ Early Help service remodelling / Disposal of surplus assets
Reduction in customer transaction costs	TNS / Channel Shift
Increases in book loans, PC usage	TNS / Channel Shift
Estate compliance e.g. health and safety, disabled access	TNS/ Depots, workshops & Stores/ Office accommodation/ Early Help service remodelling / Disposal of surplus assets
Increase in building usage i.e. footfall	TNS

Reduction in carbon emissions from LCC estate	TNS/ Depots, workshops & Stores/ Office accommodation/ Early Help service remodelling / Channel Shift / Disposal of surplus assets
Increased co-location with partners	TNS/ Office accommodation/ Early Help service remodelling / Disposal of surplus assets

### 3.1 Financial implications

UBB is an important element of the Council's Spending Review programme. The UBB programme aims in total to save £2m across the various work streams, in addition to this, the programme management structure has been asked to oversee the delivery of £2.2m of savings that are part of other reviews but are best managed through the UBB framework (primarily Transforming Neighbourhood Services). At this point it has achieved reductions in budgets of £1.3m.

There is no specific amount of saving to be achieved from UBB in 2016/17 or 2017/18, but it is anticipated that the full amount will be achieved by 2018/19.

It is important to be clear that savings are accounted for when an executive decision has been taken to approve the changes required to deliver the savings and reduce service budgets to reflect the planned cost reductions. Once a service's budget has been reduced, it will need to implement the agreed measures in order to live within the lower budget. It is vital for the service to keep focus on delivery as failure to spend within reduced budgets will undermine the overall financial strategy behind the spending reviews.

Savings from the Early Help work stream will not form part of the UBB saving, but it has been incorporated into the governance structure to facilitate better management of the overall programme.

UBB is charged with achieving efficiencies without regard to whether individual savings benefit the General Fund or the Housing Revenue Account (HRA). It is therefore accepted that some savings achieved will benefit the HRA (and thus be 'lost' to the General Fund). Nevertheless, given the scale of the General Fund budget gap, the UBB board is expected to prioritise work which primarily benefits the General Fund.

Many UBB work streams may achieve or facilitate capital receipts from the disposal of land and buildings. Though desirable, these receipts do not count against the savings guideline outlined above as this relates purely to the General Fund or HRA revenue budgets.

Alistair Cullen  
Principal Accountant – Corporate Accountancy



### **3.2 Legal implications**

There are no legal implications arising directly from the content of this report however Legal Services are being engaged with on the work streams as appropriate. The legal advice will differ dependent upon the work stream, property under consideration and the proposals.

Emma Horton  
Head of Law (Commercial, Property & Planning)

### **3.3 Equalities implications**

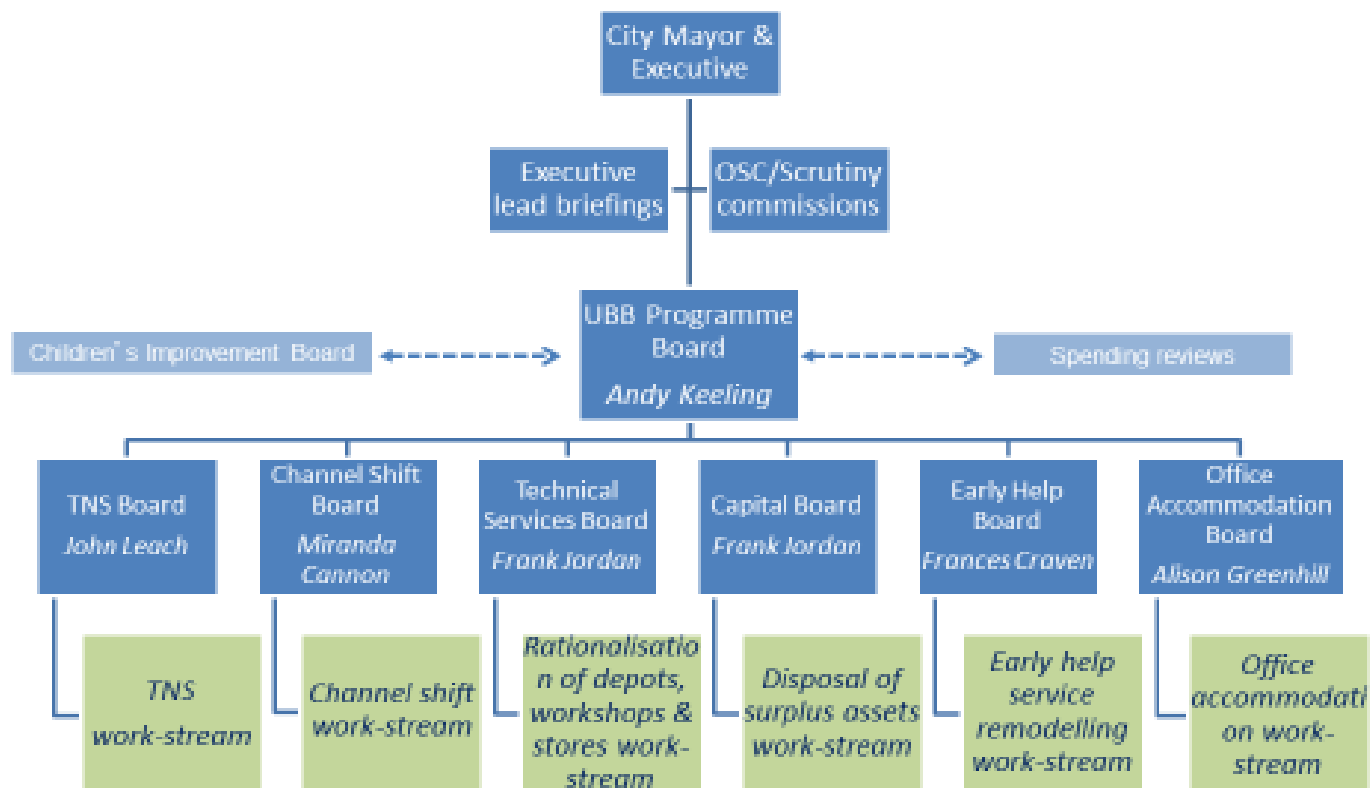
There are two areas for comment regarding equalities implications: EIAs undertaken for each phase of the TNS programme; the handling of employees' reasonable adjustments as part of office accommodation moves.

EIAs have been undertaken for each phase of the TNS programme and each has carefully set out changes to customer access arising from the channel shift activities, and wider issues arising regarding access to various sites under consideration, identified during public consultation. These considerations during the decision making process have ensured that we are meeting the intent of our Public Sector Equality Duty.

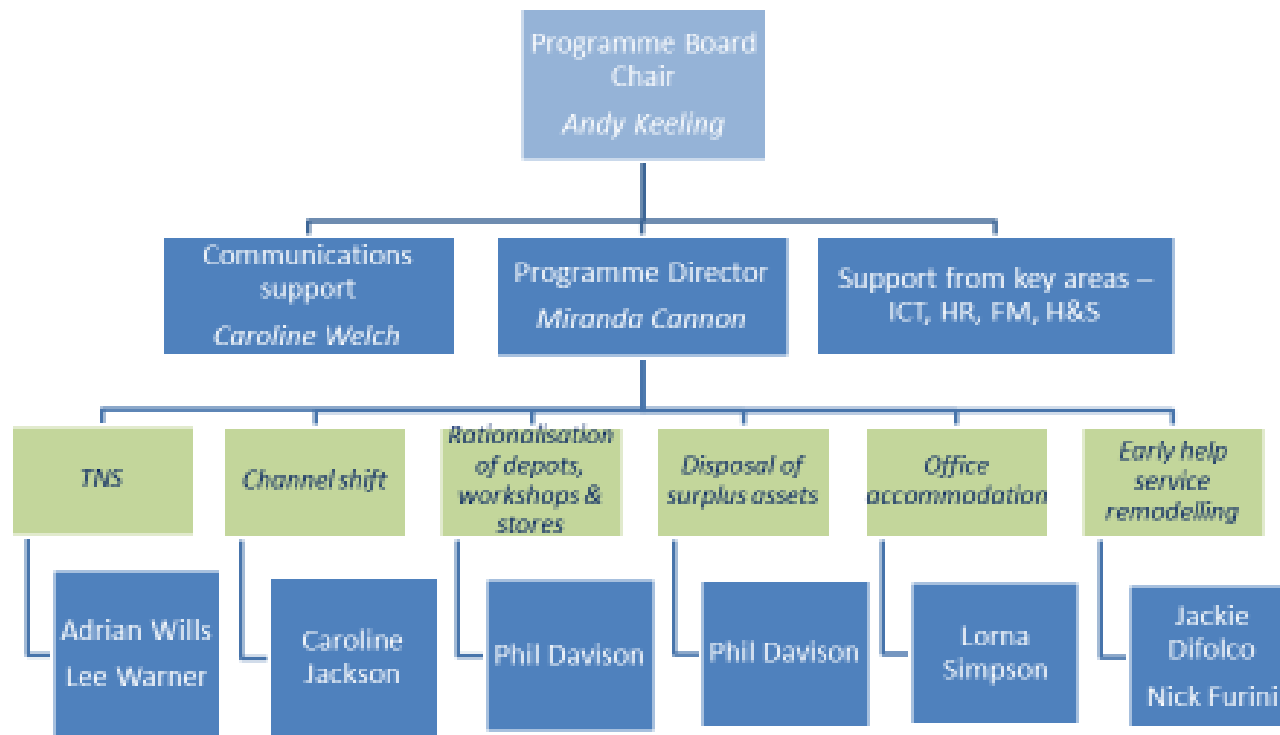
Major office moves have embedded the efficient transfer of reasonable adjustments - IT software and specialised furniture and equipment - from previous offices to ensure continued support for disabled employees. However, a very small number of issues have arisen regarding the accommodation of some reasonable adjustments - alternative desk configurations and specific lighting and working space requirements - into hot desking schemes. There has been sufficient flexibility in new office workspace configurations to sort out these problems eventually, over time, but at a cost to the disabled employee and their productivity. There is a need to clarify the responsibility of managers to address these 'fuzzier' issues as well, before office moves take place, so the meeting of these reasonable adjustments can also be a seamless process.

Irene Kszyk, Corporate Equalities Lead, ext 374147.

## Appendix 1 – Programme governance



# Programme delivery - resources





## Appendix 2 – Rationalisation of depots, workshops and stores

The following 8 depots have been identified as quick disposals with no impact on service delivery:

<b>Property name</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Overview</b>
Aylestone Recreation Ground South	Saffron Lane	Site containing a garage used to store small parks maintenance equipment and a small, run-down kitchen and seating area located away from the garage.
Humberstone Park Depot	Uppingham Road	Series of unused storage spaces.
Belgrave Cemetery Store	Loughborough Road	Storage facility for equipment for maintaining the grounds.
Rushey Fields changing rooms	Harrison Road	Previously a parks store but now vacant and closed.
Rushey Fields depot	Harrison Road	Previously a parks depot but now vacant and closed.
Mowmacre depot	Thurcaston Road	Derelict buildings unused
Western Park store	Hinckley Road	Parks equipment store
Western Park golf course depot	Scudamore Road	Parks depot within the golf course but now the golf course closed; it is no longer needed.

## Appendix 3 - Transforming Neighbourhood Services

### Summary of building outcomes to date

#### South Area: Executive decision, March 2014

Outcome	Number of buildings
Retain for current use	5
Relocate service and put to alternative use	1
Relocate service and market commercially	1
Relocate service and demolish for housing	1
Further work required	1

Number of buildings invested in: 2

#### West Area: Executive decision, September 2014

Outcome	Number of buildings
Retain for current use	5
Relocate service and re-let shop unit	1
Relocate service and transfer to community	3
Further work required	2

Number of buildings invested in: 2

#### North West Area: Executive decision, June 2016

Outcome	Number of buildings
Retain for current use	6
Relocate service and market commercially	2
Relocate service and re-let shop unit	2
Relocate service and transfer to community	2
Further work required	2

Number of buildings invested in: 3