



Evaluation Report



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1 Executive Summary

In 2009 the Council embarked on an ambitious fundamental service review as part of its **abc** programme to review and restructure administrative and support functions. This work resulted in the creation of a centralised administrative service called Business Services (BS) in 2011.

The service has been in operation for over a year and a comprehensive evaluation has now been carried out, measuring progress against the key deliverables and principles originally developed by the project team. This report covers in some detail the evidence of progress along with honest and forthright feedback from the staff working in the service and their customers.

This review was one of the most ambitious the Council has ever taken in terms of scale and scope and every employee has felt the impact of the review to a greater or lesser extent.

The boldness of the decision to centralise administration across an organisation of the size and complexity of the Council is still unusual; we believe Coventry was the first local authority to undertake a complete centralisation of administration services and other local authorities and other public sector organisations are only now developing similar projects, often approaching us to get understanding of the way we approached and carried out the review.

We have learned many valuable lessons from this review. The pragmatic decision to “lift and shift” the service at launch rather than transform the organisations back office processes and then launch has created some difficulties and reduced the overall effectiveness and efficiency of the service. However the review was delivered within the spirit of transformation and, where possible, as the implementation rolled out some re-engineering of processes inevitably took place. There is still much more to do.

Understandable, but difficult, tensions between the Target Operating Model (TOM), with its ‘one size fits all’ approach and the degree of tailoring required within service areas still exist today. This was exasperated by the loss of experienced staff and our failure to ensure they transferred knowledge to newer staff before they left. Some services areas drew battle lines over this issue; others worked with us on finding a joint solution.

Business Services has been on a major learning curve we have not always got it right and accept that our performance needs to continue to improve.

The Council is not unique in struggling to embrace change, but it can be a stubborn organisation with a tendency to prefer the past and “the way we’ve always done things around here”. In some areas there has been a high degree of resistance and this has been difficult to manage particularly against the backcloth of high vacancy levels, high sickness absence and corresponding dips in performance levels at implementation. Similarly there were pockets of resistance within BS around new management arrangements, new ways of working and the need to be flexible which have had to be addressed.

More assertive leadership in the early stages of this review across all directorates may have helped to ensure better organisational readiness and acceptance of the new model. On implementation many service areas have felt as though the new structure has been imposed on them rather than them being a part of the review and owning it. The accountability and ownership have been firmly placed with Business Services rather than joint ownership of a corporate service.

However there have been some significant and important achievements for the service in a relatively short period of time. Services are now, in the main, beginning to accept there they have to do things differently and that we will not reverse our decision to centralise our administrative function. A more mature dialogue between services areas and Business Services has started to take place, not based on an adversarial “them and us” position, but on the understanding that the answer lies in working together. We have some refinement to do of the model and the management structure and £450,000 savings to find next year, but we feel are in good shape to tackle these, with CMB’s strong continued visible support.

One of our main barriers to further progress is around the property infrastructure and we will be working with colleagues on the **abc** strategic property review to address some of these issues.

Moving forward the main focus needs to be on true organisational transformation, the future shape of the organisation and end to end re-engineering of processes to enable Business Services to provide the seamless, efficient, consistent support function it was designed to do. Business Services has a key role to play, as does the rest of Customer and Workforce Services through its enabling platform work - driven by strategic leadership at CMB.

Finally, this review, its implementation and the learning from the evaluation provides a wealth of data on how we handle change in the future. We now intend to capture this learning in a separate paper to bring to Transformation Board/CMB so the lessons learned are understood, acted upon and help to ensure that the future transformation of services across the organisation benefit from this major piece of work.

Transformation Board are asked to review the findings and approve the recommendations.

2 Introduction

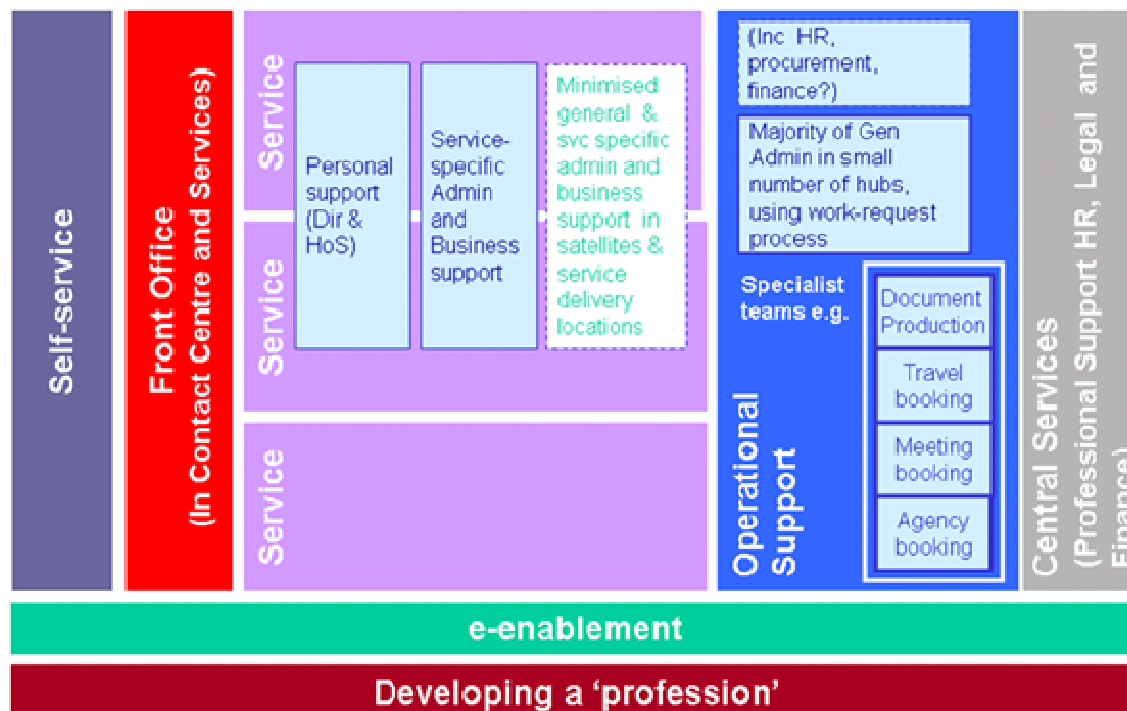
Background

As part of the **abc** Transformation Programme a fundamental service review of Admin and Business Support Services was initiated in order to create a professional administration service which would provide support across the Council. Existing ways of working were inefficient on a number of levels:

- High proportion of the workforce (645 FTE) providing back office support
- Heavily paper-based with non-standard processes
- Service provision was inconsistent
- Too many job roles and job families
- Multiple small teams with small spans of control and extensive management structures
- A salary budget in excess of £13m

New Service Vision and Target Operating Model

A new target operating model (below) was developed to address these issues :



The key concepts of the model were:

- ✓ A location based model split into five areas: Inner City 1, Inner City 2, Inner City 3, Outer City CLYP and Outer City CMS to provide the organisation with flexibility to meet future service demand across all directorates
- ✓ Service specific teams to support operational areas
- ✓ Personal support based on entitlement
- ✓ Specialist teams to process specific tasks such as travel booking/meeting booking
- ✓ Self-service wherever possible

The model was designed to:

- Deliver a consistent level of administrative support to employees either through self-service where appropriate or specialist centres
- Establish the new service as a professional service similar to Human Resources and Finance
- Deliver financial benefits from increased efficiency, reducing the workforce and from grade realignment

The Evaluation Framework

A number of elements have been drawn together to develop a fully comprehensive evaluation report, and the service has been evaluated against the principles, values and behaviours established at the beginning of the review. :



❖ Strategic principles

The new service will:

- ✓ “Simplify the need for administration wherever possible, through a robust process of challenge. Identify where processes can be simplified and automated”
- ✓ “Ensure consistent and fair provision of administration support on a Council wide basis, based on a clear definition of entitlement for different roles and types of work”
- ✓ “Standardise ways of doing things – define and promote one standard process for an activity that is used across the Council, and challenge hard any non-compliance with this”
- ✓ “Make the right way the easy way by designing processes, policies and systems in ways that incentivise people to use them”
- ✓ “Standardise underlying IT systems, email/intranet access and data stores, reducing fragmentation and proliferation”

❖ Operating principles

The new service will work effectively through

- ✓ “A focus on electronic data capture at source and capture once, use many times- reducing the need for rekeying, reducing error, and dramatically increasing information sharing possibilities”
- ✓ “A focus on self-sufficiency – make self-service easy to use and co-ordinate the roll out and management of systems. Set clear expectations about what different teams/roles do themselves. Ensure that this is reasonable, based on balance of costs, time, benefits, skills scarcity and up skilling required”
- ✓ “Exploiting the existing Contact Centre to increase call-handling, enquiry handling and resolution at first point of contact. Design processes to minimise unnecessary interruptions to Administration and service delivery staff”
- ✓ “Maximising team size and use of co-location, using consistent ways of working – giving greater efficiency, consistency, resilience and resourcing flexibility through economies of scale”
- ✓ “Maximising team size and use of co-location, using consistent ways of working – giving greater efficiency, consistency, resilience and resourcing flexibility through economies of scale”
- ✓ “Decoupling execution of tasks from physical location where possible and sensible – to enable work to be carried out in larger teams in other places where appropriate”
- ✓ “Decoupling administration skills and professional service-specific skills where possible, to enable Administration staff to be resourced more flexibly around the organisation”
- ✓ “Using dedicated teams for specialist, common corporate services. Consider best method of delivery including partnership or external suppliers to deliver services where this is more efficient and does not unnecessarily impact on service delivery quality (e.g. travel management, event management and venue management)”
- ✓ “Developing administration and business support as a profession with career structures and job roles that harness the skills, aspirations and enthusiasm of administration and business support staff and ensure that the Council has a modern, flexible workforce with the right skills for the future. Reduce the number of jobs and jobs families”
- ✓ “Using flexible management and resourcing structures that enable staff to be deployed appropriately to meet changing needs and seasonal variations within the Council”

❖ Underpinning these principles are the values and behaviours of the service:

- ✓ “To provide a professional, consistent and responsive service to our customers”
- ✓ “To ensure our staff are well managed, well equipped, motivated and competent”
- ✓ “To focus on continuous improvement by exploring new ways of working and checking and challenging what we do as a business “

3 Key Deliverables

- ✓ £2.4million was saved by the organisation and a £900,000 one off saving was achieved as a result of posts remaining vacant during the implementation and bedding in period
- ✓ The workforce has shrunk from the proposed model of 591.60 FTE to 537 FTE (data correct as at 1 October 2012). The reduction in numbers can be attributed to the following factors:
 - Devolved posts were returned to the operational areas
 - Reduced posts to fund operating costs
 - As the organisation continues to shrink, the admin support function is also shrinking
- ✓ BS has dealt with 1.12 million calls in a year, equating to approximately 20,000 telephone calls each week; spending over 568 hours on just incoming calls per week
- ✓ The creation and development of a new management structure and in particular people developing into new large managerial jobs
- ✓ Reduction in the number of job families from 36 to 14
- ✓ Levels of sickness absence this year have improved considerably in comparison to 2011/2012 as a result of consistent proactive rather than reactive case management
- ✓ New technologies (digital pens/dragon software) have been trialled by the service to achieve further efficiency gains
- ✓ Progress has been made to multi-skill staff to undertake both general administration and specialist work. Extensive training opportunities have been made available to staff as shown in the Appendix, over 3,000 days of training were undertaken by staff
- ✓ Clearer lines of responsibility and accountability have been established
- ✓ There were 41 internal promotions and 17 external promotions.
- ✓ Implementation of one room booking system via FM Facts where 90% of the rooms are available on a self-serve basis
- ✓ Child Protection backlog of 255 case conference minutes in July reduced to below 90 by November through flexible resourcing
- ✓ Moving from Access Storage to Iron Mountain has saved circa £18,000 per annum
- ✓ Stationery has been centralised across the organisation and a standardised process for requesting stationary and replenishing stock has been implemented resulting in further efficiencies
- ✓ Creation of a virtual minute taking hub to meet the unprecedented demand for meeting support
- ✓ Electronic diary management system implemented for social workers to further drive self-service

4 The Evaluation Assessment

The evaluation tests the extent to which new service has delivered against the strategic and operational principles and the values and behaviours expected of people working with and in the service.

Strategic principles evaluation

“Simplify the need for administration wherever possible, through a robust process of challenge. Identify where processes can be simplified and automated”

What’s worked

- An electronic diary management system has been implemented for social workers and managers in CLYP reducing admin time and activity. Electronic diary systems have been set up in outer city locations for room bookings.
- Introduced electronic recording systems in CLYP replacing hard copy systems, used to secure email for minute distribution, cutting down on paper work and increasing security
- Streamlined the process relating to “missing” children and families, using more electronic forms of notification which has reduced the time taken to process reports
- Use of secure email for minute distribution in safeguarding, cutting down on hard copies to reduce costs
- Implementation of Protocol telephone messaging for Fostering and Adoption
- Working with CLYP management to reduce the high level of minutes being taken by offering alternatives, e.g. recording meetings, or attendees taking action points only
- Facilitating self service via training operational staff on use of systems and equipment
- Online grocery shopping has been introduced in Youth Offending Service (YOS) for homeless food parcels
- Creation of crystal reports on M3 system has enabled operational staff to produce their own statistical information, while automation of electronic ordering and invoicing processes for Highways has reduced time spent printing, faxing, scanning and then re-creating invoices
- Closer working with Post and Fast Print (P&FP) has enabled BS to re-direct larger mail merge/copying/print jobs. Reduction in expenditure associated with MFDs by putting measures in place and communicating to staff to reduce the amount of colour printing and double sided printing

Challenges and issues :

- Despite a comprehensive set of guidance and information being published on the intranet and meetings held over 18 weeks of implementation; service areas, customers and stakeholders in all directorates did not fully engage with the messaging and communications. This was a major transformational change for many customers and at that time their main interest was how they would be affected individually; naturally they only heard what was important to them. There are lessons to be learnt from this for all future transformational projects particularly Money Matters where culture change is crucial in delivering the project successfully

- In the main the introduction of BS initially was a "lift and shift" exercise which reduced staff numbers but not necessarily levels of work or redesigned processes. It would have been aided by all directorates preparing better and trying to pre-empt the impact of the changes of the forthcoming model by taking the opportunity to review and simplify processes
- P&FP resources continue to be underutilised and there are examples from across the organisation of managers challenging the use of P&FP preferring to use external sources at a higher cost
- Services in CLYP have also expressed concerns about the confidentiality of using P&FP, but we have reassured them that P&FP staff are subject to data confidentiality, and are appropriately trained
- Too much time and effort is still being spent on minuting non-essential meetings. BS supports on average 200 meetings each week; over 10,000 meetings a year. On average, 1,400 hours are spent supporting meetings each week - equivalent to over 38 FTEs. This support includes preparation time, meeting attendance, writing/reviewing and approving the minutes. The cost of the support is approximately £750,000 a year

"Ensure consistent and fair provision of administration support on a Council wide basis, based on a clear definition of entitlement for different roles and types of work"

What's worked

- The level of PA support that has been provided has, on the whole, remained aligned to the proposed model of entitlement based on a manager's grade. However, some directorates, have requested more support for managers due to the spans of control and nature of the work. BS has responded to this demand by bringing in more resource
- Resourcing across all operational sites is managed flexibly to ensure consistent cover, staff are moved according to need, workflow, peaks and troughs of workload and holiday, sickness cover etc. to ensure that there is always access to BS services. Where there is only one member of admin staff based at satellite locations general admin tasks are sent electronically from other BSCs and P&FP for processing to maintain service levels
- High turnover in the Short Term Assessment and Response Team (Community Services) resulted in a considerable amount of time being spent in training/mentoring of staff. BS introduced documented processes to ensure that this downtime was reduced and these are now reviewed and revised regularly

Challenges and issues

- ✓ The workaround Scheduler and Register introduced during the implementation were not fit for purpose; these systems would have given the management team the tools to analyse the demand for different services across the organisation and place its resources more effectively
- ✓ Some service areas failed to share concerns about the implications of allowing experienced and knowledgeable staff to leave on ER/VR without ensuring the processes were in place to undertake any knowledge transfer; this has been highlighted in Legal Services

- ✓ High levels of vacancies across all areas at the launch of BS meant that resources had to be allocated to areas by priority rather than by skills and knowledge
- ✓ Further work needs to be done with the Care Director processes around clarifying what the specific roles of adult social care staff and BS staff is in the assessment of referrals. The levels of training and experience needed for admin staff to carry out this function are highly demanding. A review with a joint project team between the services started in December to address this issue.
- ✓ BS is a large service with career opportunity which creates regular churn in the system which results in a continual recruitment/training process which creates delays and inconsistency of standards.
- ✓ Minute taking has presented problems in terms of volume and timing of meetings and the lack of existing skills/experience within BS around this process
- ✓ Whilst the model was in development for some two years prior to implementation there are many examples of where the model did not reflect the needs of the services. This has created tension in trying to adhere to the model and adopt a 'one size fits all' approach with meeting customer needs and not taking a backward step.

“Standardise ways of doing things – define and promote one standard process for an activity that is used across the Council, and challenge hard any non-compliance with this”

What's worked

- Enforcing compliance with 'wholesale mail'. Through the centralising of stationery we now source all envelopes from P&FP, who procure stocks of pre-printed return, addressed envelopes. To minimise the costs we have standardised the number of sizes of envelopes provided; this has also simplified stationery requirements. In the last month the rate of wholesale mail was at 65%, as opposed to 50% for last year producing savings
- BS now runs a Pool Cars booking system for CC4, and is working with the Sustainability Team to run a pilot scheme from Whitley Depot
- Introduced a standard minute format for Children's Social Care meetings which can be directly uploaded onto Protocol
- Guidance notes have been produced to ensure that the updating of Protocol after conferences is done consistently by all staff
- Stationery has been centralised across the organisation and a standardised process for requesting stationery and replenishing stock has been implemented to keep control and maximise savings
- A virtual minute taking hub has been established and a structured approach has been applied to the training and development of staff in BSCs where there is a high demand for minutes
- Implementation of one room booking system via FM Facts and the development of self service in this area

Challenges and issues

- Across PA services there are examples of where PAs are being asked to do tasks on behalf of the directorate which are more appropriate for junior BS staff
- Non-compliance with the new ways of working by some staff and customers; some: operational areas refusing to use the work request process and staff are refusing to undertake work they are not familiar with
- Delay in access rights to BOXI for staff to obtain reports on absences coupled with previous sickness data not appearing on BOXI reports
- Large numbers of BS staff who are reluctant to minute meetings due to lack of experience or knowledge of the service
- Some operational areas in outer city areas such as in Adult Education and some parts of Community Services and CLYP do not have access to IT facilities/email accounts and a number of MFDs are not up to minimum standard (scanning facilities, double sided)

“Make the right way the easy way by designing processes, policies and systems in ways that incentivise people to use them”

What's worked

- Digital dictation machines have been introduced in Legal Services. It is now easier to transfer files and easier to monitor progress transcriptions through the workflow process
- Detailed data protection protocols have been written for all new starters in CLYP
- New standard templates and protocols developed for Educational Psychologist (EP) reports.
- Process notes created for CLYP managers who request admin support to update Resourcelink to encourage self-service
- A corporate complaints procedures manual has been established for forwarding, chasing and closing complaints
- Weekly orders for materials have been introduced at Whitley Depot; all supervisors and suppliers can now order their own materials and BS staff no longer get involved until the delivery tickets/invoices require processing
- Formatting of the Protocol form used by the Integrated Youth Support Service has been automated

Challenges and issues

- Delays in the procurement of the new equipment and an additional delay with installing the software onto laptops
- It has been difficult to get operational staff particularly in some directorates to fill in forms or emails for work requests where they have admin staff nearby
- Care Director – The new case management system continues to be more resource intensive than anticipated which is impacting on day to day service delivery. For the past year, Adult Social Care (ASC) has sought to find resolutions to these issues and work continues to resolve this. BS continues to support the system but this has impacted on other areas

“Standardise underlying IT systems, email/intranet access and data stores, reducing fragmentation and proliferation”

What’s worked

- All Business Service Centres (BSCs) have their own email address which makes it easier for customers to submit a request to a specific BSC if appropriate
- Functional email boxes allow team leaders to allocate work requests to staff
- Shared folders are being used to retain operational information
- All BS staff now have access to the corporate network
- We have improved document storage using central folders instead of local document storage and retaining copies of work requests
- Following difficulties with service provision in Legal Services, a feedback inbox has been introduced for Legal Services staff to provide real time feedback which can be accessed directly by the management team and provide a forum for the Legal Services team to communicate on particular issues

Challenges and issues

- In Adult Social Care there are still some areas where PCs are shared between admin and operational staff and are running on Windows 2003
- In Outer City CMS progress to provide laptops has been slow
- Still some resistance across the organisation by operational staff to use the functional BSC mailboxes to submit work requests
- Technology needs to be up to date on all sites; some BSCs require docking stations
- A number of ICT systems across the council have proven to be resource hungry such as Care Director and Resourcelink. Known limitations of systems such as IProcurement, and Resourcelink have held back many efficiency opportunities

Operating principles evaluation

“Focus on electronic data capture at source and capture once, use many times-reducing the need for rekeying, reducing error, and dramatically increasing information sharing possibilities”

What’s worked

- BS has reduced the large number of historic templates used in Legal Services. These templates have been condensed and transferred into the BSC shared drive to allow updates to be made in a more efficient manner
- We have a shared area within each BSC where we keep master copies of all documents produced by BS so that any future requests for amendments can easily be facilitated Local Performance Boards – single system used in each BSC detailing team performance

- Recording of LAC and Child Protection cases through the development of functional spread sheets
- The Adult Education Management Information System – Aqua has been developed to pre populate forms, this will reduce the number of errors allowing more accurate reports for funding and Ofsted reports
- BS staff have supported the introduction/implementation of new operational IT systems, e-caf, SURFACS, changes to Protocol and the Protocol dashboards - ensuring managers are supported with how the data can be used
- Mileage sheets to fleet have been amalgamated so that all the data is on one spread sheet and is only sent by one person although, multiple users can input into the system
- Standardised registers have been developed across all day services units in adult social care that show service users' attendance to update on the Care Director system to ensure service users are not charged
- 'Tell us once' implemented and updated by BS staff in Legal Services and used in the Registrar's Office, to ensure all customers only have to pass information onto the Council once, rather than several times to different departments

Challenges and issues

- ✓ The limitations of the Care Director system means that separate recording spread sheets have to be used across the various teams to track secondary team involvement in cases, resulting in duplication, additional monitoring required and a case management system that is not fully recording involvement in the case
- ✓ Simultaneous access issues to the Health and Safety spreadsheet by multiple users
- ✓ The concept of performance management of teams was not well received initially by BS staff

“Focus on self-sufficiency – make self-service easy to use and co-ordinate the roll out and management of systems. Set clear expectations about what different teams/roles do themselves. Ensure that this is reasonable, based on balance of costs, time, benefits, skills scarcity and up skilling required”

What's worked

- The meeting room and venue management project has made the room booking process easier to use with a focus on self-serve. All internal rooms are now registered on the corporate system and approximately 90% of the rooms are available on a self-serve basis.
- Outer CMS has provided Adult Social Care with a staff records management tool to record staff supervision, record driving policy compliance and to support monitoring of professional registrations and CRB checks. Provision of the tool has helped operational managers to manage their own staff and reduces the need for cross checking
- Training of CLYP operational management to complete their own monthly financial reports using budget buddy finance system

- Shadowing process set up in CLYP to hand back the completion of the TABS Report to operational management
- Outer City CMS has provided a management tool for adult social care managers to enable tracking of 1:1s, appraisals, professional registrations and driving policy compliance
- More operational staff now have purchase cards, reducing the need for BS staff to distribute petty cash

Challenges and issues Factor

- Some service areas were reluctant to have their own meeting rooms added to the corporate system. There were also issues about confidentiality in some cases which had to be overcome
- There are a number of administrative posts that still sit outside of BS which are creating duplication and ineffective use of resources. In addition, a number of new administrative posts have been created.
- There has been a reluctance by managers who have previously delegated budget management responsibility to admin staff to take back responsibility for completing BCRs Senior management in some directorates has not been supportive in encouraging managers to self-serve.
- Lack of information and/or the acknowledgement from operational staff about the requirement for self service has been a huge obstacle and continues to be an issue. As a result employee self-service capability has not significantly improved and the desire to self-serve remains poor

“Exploit the existing contact centre to increase call-handling, enquiry handling and resolution at first point of contact. Design processes to minimise unnecessary interruptions to administration and service delivery staff”

What’s worked

- Responsibility for the Housing Reception which was previously under the management of Business Services has been successfully transferred to the Contact Centre which falls in line with the other reception points

Challenges and issues

- Limited progress has been made in migrating calls volumes to the Contact Centre. BS is currently analysing the nature of the calls that are being received and what specialist knowledge is required to answer these calls. The BS Management Team recognises that there are operational efficiencies to be gained by closer working with the Contact Centre
- With the exception of Whitley BSC, all BSCs are operating from an antiquated telephone system where telephone performance data is proving to be unreliable. Furthermore, this has prevented the service from conducting an analysis of the types of calls that are being received. The successful roll out of Pro Centre (call centre technology) at Whitley BSC has

shown that detailed reports are available and the technology has already shown an improvement in performance. The cost of rolling Pro Centre to further BSCs is estimated to be £300k and a business case may need to be considered by ICT Strategy Board. However ICT is currently considering alternative and possibly more cost effective solutions.

“Maximise team size and use of co-location, using consistent ways of working – giving greater efficiency, consistency, resilience and resourcing flexibility through economies of scale”

What’s worked

- BS staff from West Orchard House, CC4 Floor 12 and CC4 Floor 2 have all been co-located to CC4 Floor 2. The co-location has provided greater capacity within the team and the benefits of team leaders being close to the team supervisor
- Outer City CLYP have moved staff and line management to the operational management to be better positions to meet the business needs of the service

Challenges and issues

- Some service areas have pushed back against the centralisation of admin support because they like the day to day management of their “own” admin support. Across the organisation service areas have avoided using the work request process, preferring to act on ad hoc requests directly to individuals. This is led to poor work planning and poor delivery against deadlines. It also has led to BS staff being asked to do tasks outside their remit
- Being hampered by the property infrastructure that we have has resulted in having more Business Service Centres than we actually need

“Decouple execution of tasks from physical location where possible and sensible – to enable work to be carried out in larger teams in other places where appropriate”

What’s worked

- PA support to senior managers can often include reasonable size projects such as organising events/briefings. It has been identified that there are tasks within such projects which could be more efficiently undertaken by a more appropriate resource within BS. We have therefore encouraged PAs to forward lower level admin tasks to either the BSC or to P&FP and for the PA to manage the organisation of those tasks
- BS support is being successfully provided remotely from BSC CC4 to the Occupier Support Teams
- The use of the enterprise reception sites under CSDD to undertake tasks from a remote location, in an effort to maximise the use of resources
- Business Services was modelled with Visual and Hearing Impairment Team (VHI) moving away from Faseman House to The Opal, with the admin support moving with them. ASC reviewed that decision and Business Services responded to this by creating a larger admin team to support them and other operational areas.

- The collation of information such as the Single Central Record and Annual Leave Planners from multiple children's centres are now managed in clusters on a central drive, rather than locally in each centre, which has led to more consistent practice
- Changes to the location of Housing Support required a review of processes. New arrangements for the sharing of documents and managing activities such as incoming post and enquiries were introduced. In the process the Housing team has become more self-sufficient due to the separation from their support team

Challenges and issues

- Some BSCs have been reluctant to undertake tasks requested from PA hubs as they have not fully understood the PA role and there have been issues with PAs not utilising the BSC appropriately
- The VHI Team work in Adult Social Care has service users with specific communication needs. This has required time and additional training resource for BS staff to become familiar with the requirements. In the meantime the service users have experienced difficulty in accessing services. Sharing of knowledge and skills relating to VHI processes within the BC was a result of losing both team leaders and the loss of four skilled and knowledgeable admin staff from this area

“Decouple administration skills and professional service-specific skills where possible, to enable Administration staff to be resourced more flexibly around the organisation”

What's worked

- BS has worked hard to multi-skill staff to undertake a range of duties that cross boundaries between the conventional general and specialist teams. This has introduced a degree of flexibility enabling BS managers to support each other by temporarily moving resource to where the demand is
- A virtual minute taking team has been established that identifies everyone with minute taking skills across the service so that they can be called upon as required. For example: Child Protection minuting rota using competent minute takers from across BS to reduce the backlog of minutes in Safeguarding
- Adult Social Care have defined the procedures of processing referrals through from the BSC into Social Care by developing a workflow for the admin function supporting case management

Challenges and issues

- ✓ Individuals with service specific knowledge have on the whole been reluctant to share their knowledge as they feared they would lose their specialism
- ✓ There is still an issue with some BS staff who do not want to 'change' and are unwilling to be flexible. Lots of issues have been escalated by employees to trade unions requiring significant management time to address them
- ✓ Operational service areas have been very protective of their work, requesting the original individual with the specialist knowledge to undertake tasks. Through team building and

better customer relationship management some of these fears have been allayed

- ✓ BS staff have raised issues about the divide of “General” and “Specialist” teams, which can cause some people to see themselves as better than others. This is something we need to move away from and move to a singular “class/category” so that specialist staff do not see themselves better or different
- ✓ Some BS staff have only been willing to work for the operational areas they previously worked for

“Use dedicated teams for specialist, common corporate services. Consider best method of delivery including partnership or external suppliers to deliver services where this is more efficient and does not unnecessarily impact on service delivery quality (e.g. travel management, event management and venue management)”

What’s worked

- Processes are in place to centralise all room bookings with work on-going to identify all external venue usage/budgets in order to control and reduce the number of external venue bookings
- A specialist team has been established to process requests for travel bookings and the issue of travel ‘scratch’ cards has been implemented in CC4
- In Inner City 2 there are teams/dedicated people dealing with course bookings, conferences, room bookings, reception, and newly qualified teachers (NQTs)
- Working with the Partnership Team – liaising with partner organisations i.e. Coventry University etc. to support/set up corporate events / conferences

Challenges and issues

- Resistance to changing old practices as we created one single process
- Some service areas have not supported the centralisation of room bookings as they have lost the preferential treatment they used to have when booking their “own” meeting rooms.
- BS has had to establish protocols to deal with prioritisation for room bookings and challenged existing practices in the Council House that allowed Members to take priority over meetings with access requirements
- The Safeguarding team within CLYP felt that it was ineffective to ask for a business case every time they needed to use an external venue due to the frequent usage of venues such as church halls and community centres by the team. BS has responded to this feedback and now accept one business case for specialist areas

“Develop administration and business support as a profession with career structures and job roles that harness the skills, aspirations and enthusiasm of administration and business support staff and ensure that the Council has a modern, flexible workforce with the right skills for the future. Reduce the number of jobs and jobs families”

What's worked

- Over 3,000 days of training have been undertaken by staff across BS since inception, including bespoke training courses to support the transition into the new service. 190 staff attended Concise Minute Taker Training at 13 sessions specifically for BS staff in response to a skills gap. Detailed training data is shown in the appendices.
- BS has taken part in the piloting of the Institute of Leadership Management (ILM) programme. This is aimed at aspiring team leaders (Level 2), current team leaders (Level 3) and senior managers (Level 5). Places were restricted to 13 per level, a high response rate was received and this has led to a further round of cohorts being planned.
- In conjunction with Telford College, BS is rolling out to the opportunity to obtain an NVQ qualification to support career development. The format of these will be work based learning together with formal workshops. 18 members of staff are currently enrolled on this programme
- Reduction in the number of job families from 36 to 14. There were 41 internal promotions and 17 external promotions
- Faster internal access to job vacancies through the introduction of a weekly BS vacancy bulletin

Challenges and issues

- The limited number of places available on the ILM programme has meant that a number of staff have had to be put on the waiting list for the next round and this has caused some frustration and disappointment.
- There was a slight delay in sourcing the provider for the NVQ qualifications
- Valuable knowledge and experienced staff were lost due to VR/ER being agreed by the operational areas prior to implementation. This was notably felt in the BSC which supports Legal Services

“Use flexible management and resourcing structures that enable staff to be deployed appropriately to meet changing needs and seasonal variations within the Council”

What's worked

- Child Protection backlog of 255 case conference minutes to be processed in July 2012; flexible management and movement of resourcing across BS has enabled us to bring the backlog down to below 90 at the end of November 2012, whilst also dealing with an increasing demand
- Provided additional support from the Council House to Christchurch House to cover the peak in School Appeals

- For the month prior to the PCC elections the Council House BSC supported the elections team by taking calls from members of the public with enquires, adding people to the register and registering people for proxy and postal voting. During the four week period the phone calls into the BSC doubled with approximately 800 enquiries being processed
- PA support provided to Public Health whilst consultation and a recruitment process is put in place
- A PA apprentice post was created to support the demand in CLYP and CMS PA hubs
- 0.5 G3 post created in the Register Office by pooling excess part time hours to provide additional reception cover to fill a resource gap
- BS support was provided for Coventry's Olympic events
- BS support is provided for the Council's emergency planning process in the form of 'loggists'
- BGH/1 BSC continues to provide support remotely to the catering service from BGH when it moved to CC1
- CC4/2 BSC continue to provide support remotely to Occupier Support and Major Projects teams from CC4 when they moved to BGH
- High levels of training requests from schools during the start of the school year were transferred to Elm Bank who assisted with the backlog and provided course managers with data on course attendance levels
- The BSC at North Avenue recognised there was a lack of trained staff to meet a critical SLA. Staff at CC1 were trained to assist North Avenue with the data input which needed to be completed at the end of the financial year. This enabled us to meet our SLAs with the services concerned and allowed charges to be sent out to schools on time
- Support for audio typing and report writing at North Avenue due to peak demand in Oct/Nov. Staff from BGH BSC and CC4 BSCs supported this work ensuring SLAs were met including statutory duties in relation to deadlines for reports.
- Support to CLYP strategic planning team on primary schools consultation exercise through October to November 2012. This involved afternoon and evening meetings across 20 schools. Volunteers from all areas of BS supported this exercise (which was predominantly done outside normal working hours)
- Support to CLYP on ECAF project (transfer of common assessment forms onto new software application) CLYP provided half of the costs/funding BS provided in excess of 100 hours to support this work
- Admin team supervisors are responsible for staff in multiple locations which supports the spans of control principles. Admin team supervisors across the service have developed into a strong citywide team, sharing issues and providing support to each other
- Staff formulas are in place in Adult Education to ensure the correct level of support is provided to meet the needs of the number of classes running at each venue where staff are on term time only contracts
- Support from PA Services for typing up of audio tapes to support Safeguarding
- Sharing of apprenticeship placement to best support the service area and ensure a variety of work for them.

Challenges and issues

- ✓ Substantial shortage of typing skills/minute takers across the whole of BS
- ✓ High levels of sickness absence in the first six months after implementation
- ✓ Inflexibility of PA services model, and the need and demand from senior management to have PA support available on a full time basis.
- ✓ Team supervisors being protective about resources without seeing the bigger picture and understanding organisational priorities
- ✓ Movement of staff can create a backfill problem leaving existing staff members under more pressure to meet deadlines
- ✓ Customers' reluctance to allow work to go to other BS Centres because of confidentiality
- ✓ Staff not wanting to do something different; resistance to change which has been escalated to the trades unions who have become involved when staff do not want to undertake new duties. This has slowed our progress as we have been engaged in frequent and protracted discussions to resolve these issues
- ✓ Work planning issues in Legal Services, leading to high volumes of short notice tasks being passed to the BSC which impacts on ability to respond quickly
- ✓ The BS Management Team have had to work really hard with our teams to change their culture of not moving. However it is slowly changing as staff are encouraged to try more development and variety
- ✓ The same level of BS staff have continued to support their operational teams even though in some areas the operational staffing levels have increased quite considerably. Operational areas must be accountable for providing budget to support the increase in work required
- ✓ Prior to implementation and during the ABSS review, the organisation froze recruitment of admin staff. Whilst this was a good strategic decision it did leave the service with approximately 138 vacant posts to deliver the new model which created a significant recruitment pressure for the management team
- ✓ The service has been functioning without a work management system for over 18 months which has limited the ability to manage resources effectively. Without the performance data, informed strategic and operational decisions cannot be taken
- ✓ Levels of demand from some operational areas such as CLYP have been far greater than expected, causing resource pressures in some Outer City CLYP BSCs

5 The Customer Survey

The Council's Corporate Research Information and Consultation (CRIC) team were assigned the task of conducting the surveys and providing the analysis of the data collected.

Customers were given a two week window to complete the survey which was available via a link on the Council's intranet site. Regular communications were issued via the Beacon Daily Round Up to encourage customers to participate in the survey.

Customers were asked a series of questions relating to their experience of BS and what the service should focus on in the future.

Participation

At the end of the survey, customers were asked which directorate they worked in. Of the 212 people that completed the survey, 200 people responded to this specific question. The table below puts into context the number of responses received in comparison to the workforce per directorate:

| Directorate | Approximate Headcount | Number of Customers who Responded | Percentage |
|----------------------------------|---|-----------------------------------|------------|
| Chief Executive | 74 | 13 | 17.5% |
| Children Learning & Young People | *1,849 (excludes school based staff) | 55 | 2.9% |
| City Services & Development | 1,637 | 35 | 2.1% |
| Community Services | 1,863 | 51 | 2.7% |
| Customer & Workforce Services | 1,047 | 31 | 2.9% |
| Finance & Legal Services | 462 | 13 | 2.8% |
| Don't Know | N/A | 2 | 1.0% |

Using a baseline date of 03/12/2012, the total workforce in the Council is 13,846 of which 6,997 are school based staff. This leaves a non-school workforce of 6,849 and when we exclude BS employees (601), the **total number of eligible customers who could respond to the survey is 6,248.**

Disappointingly only **3.39%** (212 out of a possible 6248) of BS customers completed the survey.

Almost half of the respondents (45%) (95 people) had worked in the Council for 10 years or more. The majority (60%) (127 people) of respondents worked at grades 5 to 8, with the highest response (19.7%) (40 people) from those working at grade 8. The greatest number of responses came from the CLYP and Community Services Directorates.

Key Findings:

- ✓ Relatively **low levels of satisfaction both in terms of the customer's last experience of BS, and with the service overall.**
- ✓ Highest levels of dissatisfaction (74%) were found in the City Services and Development (26 people out of the 35 that responded in a directorate whose workforce is approximately 1,637

Dissatisfaction with BS increased in respondents who had worked in the Council for a longer amount of time, further suggesting that those staff were more resistant to change.

- ✓ Highest levels of satisfaction were found in the Chief Executive's Directorate.
- ✓ General feeling that **the objectives of the ABSS review had not been achieved and that perhaps these were not the right outcomes for the service.** Standardisation and self-serve were not meeting the needs of the service areas and may have increased hidden costs as well as having a negative impact on customers
- ✓ There was **higher levels of agreement that some progress had been made with the statements: "simplify the need for administration" and 'standardise ways of doing things"**
- ✓ When asked if BS **could focus on just one thing to improve, 24.3% of respondents (51 people) wanted 'BS staff to have a greater understanding of the service areas they support'**. This question also drew a lot of other comments including the need for flexibility/dedicated support for certain tasks and a more customer driven mentality
- ✓ When asked **if there was one service the centres should never stop providing, 15.8% of respondents (33 people) identified meeting support.** 40.8% specified Other which including the following areas:
 - Dealing with customers and visitors both face to face and on the telephone/customer information and signposting
 - Scanning and data entry
 - Ordering stationery
 - Salary information, timesheets and Promoting Health at Work Information
 - Work specific to the service, particularly around collection of certain data, support of specialist software systems and production of directories and packs

6 The Employee Survey

The Council's Corporate Research Information and Consultation (CRIC) team were assigned the task of conducting the surveys and providing the analysis/key findings of the data collected.

Employees were also given a two week window to complete the survey which was available via a link on the Council's intranet site. Regular communications were issued via the Beacon Daily Round Up to encourage employees to participate in the survey.

Employees were asked a series of questions relating to their workloads/the service they were providing and their views on whether the service had delivered against the objectives that were set for it.

Participation

Approximately, 44% of BS staff responded to the Employee Survey (260 employees out of 595) which is regarded as a high response rate.

Key Findings:

- ✓ 67% of staff agreed that their work is interesting/challenging and that their skills are used to their full potential (53%)
- ✓ A majority of staff (52%) feel they are under pressure most of the time/have too much work to do. Additional comments included a lack of consistency with regard to workload across the centres
- ✓ Of those who were in post when the ABSS review began in 2009, a large proportion - 57.4% felt less satisfied or considerably less satisfied with their role. Comments here included: increased pressure and workload, a sense of being 'de-skilled' and feeling less part of a team in the new structure
- ✓ Staff felt that in order to improve, the service needed to focus on:
 - Better career path/development
 - Clarity over who gets what admin support
 - Use of staff to manage peaks and troughs
 - Removing silos between BCs
 - Improving systems
 - Reducing duplication in management (Service Managers trying to get involved in day to day management of BS staff)
- ✓ For some of the questions, there were noticeable differences in response from staff working in a centralised BS centres (86 people) in comparison to those based in the operational area (141 people). For example:

"The work I do is interesting and challenging" – 57% of staff in a centralised BSC agreed with this statement, in comparison to 74.5% of those based in an operational area

"My knowledge, skills and abilities are used to their full potential" – 45% of a staff in a centralised BSC agreed with this statement, in comparison to 60% of those based in an operational area

"I am encouraged to try out new ideas" – 35% of staff a centralised BSC agreed with this statement, in comparison to 47% of those based in an operational area

There were also some differences in staff supporting different Directorates. Staff supporting the CLYP and City Services & Development Directorates were *most likely to feel under pressure*

There were no significant differences in how staff answered the questions based on whether or not they were in post at the start of the review.

7 Business Services Values/Behaviours

In addition to the operating principles three underpinning principles were developed for Business Services which set out the values, behaviours and ethos of the new service, which were very much in the spirit of the CWS directorate:

“...To provide a professional, consistent and responsive service to our customers”

“...To ensure our staff are well managed, well equipped, motivated and competent”

“...To focus on continuous improvement by exploring new ways of working and checking and challenging what we do as a business “

We have gone a long way to embedding these principles in the new service, through our leadership, management, induction, training and development and performance management, but we still have a way to go as the service matures. It is fair to say that within the service there is still some resistance to the new model, but this is diminishing over time particularly given the amount of turnover of staff we are experiencing. We will ensure that any resistance does not affect performance levels, where it is as a result of lack of training or competency we will provide the necessary support and development and where there is just an unwillingness to embrace the new ways of working we will tackle these robustly.

One of the areas of greatest achievement in the formation of the new service is the extent to which we have delivered on our objective of ‘professionalising’ the service through enhancing skills through training and providing career pathways, through management development opportunities. The appetite amongst the staff who want to develop their career with the service and the council has been rewarding, indeed it was disappointing that we were unable to meet all of the requests for management training this year.

Another achievement which is underpinned by the values, behaviours and standards throughout CWS is the extent to which we have reduced sickness absence and managed poor performance. It is clear that under the previous arrangements admin staff had not been subject to the same performance management rigour as expected within CWS. Standards have been clearly set and a consistency of approach adopted which is fair - but clear - in terms of our expectations. This has resulted in a substantial reduction in sickness absence across the service and the management of a number of ‘performance’ related disciplinary cases which have set the tone for the service. Equally support is now more consistently provided to admin staff who in the past were overlooked but are now supported through regular 1:1 supervision. Appraisals are open and honest. Difficult conversations are not shied away from and a high standard of people management is expected from managers and supervisors.

Technology has been an issue; some of the systems and hardware used are hampering the service becoming more efficient. These need to be prioritised and addressed through the work of the ICT strategy group in line with service developments in directorates. Similarly the picture of BS staff embracing new technology has been mixed, but broadly positive, with laptops at meetings now the norm, the trialling of digital pens, voice recognition software etc. being undertaken. In the spirit of the enabling platform work BS along with the rest of CWS must be at the cutting edge of new technology trials and leading the way in developing new ways of working and promoting these within the service and across the council.

The service has significant additional savings targets detailed earlier in the report of some £450k. In order to be able to deliver this we have to keep challenging our own practices and find more efficient and effective ways of doing things, challenging if activities need doing at all and engage with our customers to make the necessary changes in the operational environment which will bring about savings.

In particular we need to ensure that we are engaging proactively with customers; through regular dialogue and feedback we can continue to shape the service to best meet the needs of our diverse customer groups without endangering the principles of a centralised/uniform service. This is reflected in our recommendation to form a regular focus group of senior managers. We also acknowledged that we need to finalise all of the outstanding SLAs, operational staff in some areas appear to be reluctant to do this (still hoping that we might revert back to old ways of working), and this has to be dealt with. This will give both parties clarity on their respective expectations and these can then be clearly communicated. In the current climate we expect to be the focus for on-going negativity as we challenge 'back office processes' and as our resource base reduces operational staff will have to fully engage in self-service to a more extensive level than they are at present.

Joint working between BS and operational areas to review back office processes has not progressed as much as we had hoped, although this is the real potential area for further savings. The biggest contributor to this has been the need to constantly reinforce the business model. Resistance to change and a desire to return back to the old model has prevented some areas objectively looking for more efficient ways of working, again this has to be addressed and CMB must demonstrate leadership in making this happen.

The BS Management Team has been effectively 'fire fighting' in its first year in terms of managing challenging behaviours from customers and staff; creating a service to an acceptable standard and dealing with high sickness levels, vacancies and loss of skill and experience. This has meant that the service has been unable to focus on delivering transformational change which is what was at the heart of the FSR, this can now be the main focus of the next phase of our development.

8 Financial Assessment

The financial savings target for the review was £2.4m and this was successfully achieved through implementation of the new service. In addition because operational running costs were not factored into the modelling and directorate budgets could not be identified £90k was topsliced from the staffing budget to accommodate running costs, this represents a further non cashable saving. An additional £900,000 one off saving was made as a result of posts remaining vacant during the implementation and bedding in period

Future savings target for BS in the 2013/14 financial year are challenging and look likely to rise to £450,000. Plans are being formalised to address this new target.

Further financial considerations

A number of financial issues emerged following implementation which was not planned for and these have had to be addressed through existing budgets:

- No funding was put in place for the running costs for the new service. Consequently, the staffing budget was cut by circa £90,000 to support the creation of an operating budget
- No funding was identified to support professional training costs that the model was based on which added pressure to the directorates overall training budget. Nevertheless, delivery of training was not compromised
- No financial assessment was made on the potential impact to the service of grant funded posts losing their funding. This will present big challenges over the next few years as it is estimated that 30% of the salary budget for BS is made up of grant and income funded budget. In simple terms this means that any savings target set for the service can only be delivered on 70% of the total budget:

As grant and income funded work continues to cease, the service will delete posts affected and will adjust its operating model accordingly. It is important to remember that individual posts sit in large job families so as we reduce grant funded posts it will affect all posts in BS.

Centralisation of budgets

The table below shows that the service will either underspend or remain within budget:

| Budget Type | Amount of Budget which BS is responsible for | Amount spent by BS at Period 8 | Remaining BS Budget |
|--------------------|---|---------------------------------------|----------------------------|
| Stationery | £118,000 | £62,666 | £55,334 |

9 Recommendations

The size of the workforce and the service provided by BS in the future will reduce. External customers are already facing the reality of having services cut or stopped altogether. As an organisation we must utilise the self-service provision or accept that some service delivery will just not happen. Stakeholders across the Council must engage with the Service and work collaboratively to find the most efficient ways of working.

The recommendations outlined below aim to build the foundations of the future shape of the service:

Strategic Recommendations

| No | Recommendation | Priority |
|-----|---|----------|
| SR1 | <u>BS to jointly work with Directorate Business Improvement teams to review back office processes</u> for the operational areas they support and put forward recommendations on improving efficiency. | High |
| SR2 | <u>BS to work with the Customer Management Review to scope and assess the benefits of developing the employee/customer self –service provision.</u> To reiterate: <i>“Assessment of the ABSS activity log suggested that 20% of the current workload could be undertaken through self-service if good systems were in place”</i> <i>“The full realisation of benefits from the administrative support TOM will not be realised until improvements to self-service are delivered”</i> | High |
| SR3 | <u>BS to identify and support meeting management requirements and drive down non-essential meetings.</u> The goal would be to produce a corporate standard that defines what the outputs will be: verbatim, minute taking or action notes. | High |
| SR4 | <u>Transfer telephone calls and related service requests (currently being processed by the BSC’s) into the Contact Centre.</u> Possible areas for inclusion are: Housing, Pest Control, CareLine, Adult Social Care, Commercial Waste, Front Line Planning Enquiries, Commercial Property Enquires, Building Control Inspection, Referral & Assessment Service, Children’s Social Care and Passport To Leisure | High |
| SR5 | <u>Operational areas to be ‘open minded’ in trialling new technologies which could improve the way in which they work.</u> For example Dragon software should be considered for dictation requirements | Medium |
| SR6 | <u>Identify and implement a process which will monitor the creation of ‘admin’ posts outside of the model. Working with the Job Evaluation and Establishment Control team.</u> To prevent duplication and maximise economies of scale. | Medium |

Operational Recommendations

| No | Recommendation | Priority |
|-----|--|----------|
| OR1 | <p><u>Review and restructure the layers of Management within BS.</u> To include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Reduction in the number of BS Managers from 5 to 4 ○ Review spans of control at Grade 6 and Grade 4 levels ○ Review expectations and roles of Grade 4 and Grade 6 posts ○ Review the Grade 5 post to determine its continuing role in the BS structure ○ Review specific roles (3 positions have been identified) in Outer City CLYP where the admin content is less than 10% and determine whether these roles should be returned to the operational area | High |
| OR2 | <p><u>Business Service Centre Managers</u> to engage with operational Service Managers to advise/develop and implement best practice relating to the management and delivery of the administration support service and to participate in service area reviews.</p> | High |
| OR3 | <p><u>Evaluate the STAR work management system</u> at the end of the pilot phase. Determine if it meets the business needs in terms of registering and allocating work more efficiently and providing the performance data to allow SLA's and volumes to be measured. This will allow a more structured approach to be applied across BS to meet demands and support hot spot areas/</p> | High |
| OR4 | <p><u>Create centres of excellence responsible for specific work.</u> Areas for inclusion are: Training, Travel Arrangements, DSE Assessments, Audio Typing, Freedom of Information Requests and Complaints, comments and compliments.</p> <p>Transfer General Admin work to one dedicated Business Service Centre</p> | High |
| OR5 | <p><u>Speed up the delivery of the refreshed strategy for ICT systems</u> to resolve compatibility issues across the authority and make it easier for people to do their job</p> | Medium |

Service Recommendations – the Customer

| No | Recommendation | Priority |
|-----|---|----------|
| SC1 | <p><u>Review the current PA support services model</u> with a view to establishing a model that is based on providing support that is driven by demand/what the customer needs rather than the Manager's grade.</p> <p>Possible option: Each Directorate is allocated a pool of hours of PA support, the Director allocates these hours across his managers and BS delivers the support. Any changes in the amount of support a manager receives is signed off by the Director</p> | High |
| SC2 | <p><u>Establish a 'Business Services Focus Group'</u> with representatives from</p> | High |

| | | |
|-----|---|--------|
| | <p>all Directorates whose purpose will be to draw out issues/concerns within their Directorates and work with the BS Management Team to address these</p> <p>As the organisation downsizes we will have greater opportunity to centralise our teams and standardise processes. BS to lead user groups to identify best practice and to act as the catalyst of standardisation</p> | |
| SC3 | <u>Finalise Service Level Agreements</u> with operational areas to ensure our customers are clear over the service being offered, with the understanding that both BS and the Customer will use this as a performance measuring tool. Priority areas: CLYP & Community Services | High |
| SC4 | <u>Continue the work with CLYP and Community Services Directorates (where meeting support is considerably high)</u> to identify and support their meeting management requirements and drive down non-essential meetings. | High |
| SC5 | <u>Clear communications to customers and staff</u> over what BS is able to offer now and in the future. Clear guidance is needed from the Money Matters Review to set the parameters of financial work and administrative work | Medium |

Service Recommendations – the Employee

| No | Recommendation | Priority |
|-----|--|----------|
| SE1 | Continue to <u>build on the training of competent minute takers</u> across BS and have a pool of staff available to be called upon | High |
| SE2 | <u>Establish a skills matrix for each employee</u> with the onus being placed on the employee to ensure it is kept updated. Through mutual discussions with their Line Manager gaps in skills are addressed | High |
| SE3 | <u>More face to face open communication and support</u> to reduce some of the staffs fears around new initiatives/ways of working | High |
| SE4 | <u>Establish a BS Employee forum</u> to allow staff the opportunity to offer constructive feedback and put forward their recommendations. This will provide a means to involve staff in the new ways of working | Medium |

10 Conclusion

The Business Services Fundamental Services Review has delivered the primary objective of saving money, reducing headcount and creating a council wide service. The degree of success of the latter is open to interpretation; the report evidences positive examples of success along with factors that have hindered progress.

It is always going to be a service with conflicting customer needs and the extent to which we satisfy those needs in the current climate will always be a cause of potential friction.

We achieved this despite this being a 'lift and shift' operation when the service was launched, rather than transformation. While we are now addressing the real transformation of back office services more could have been done with directorates during the two years of planning ahead of the launch of the service. The TOM is predicated on 'one size fits all' approach and while we have not slavishly adhered to that we have aimed to keep to the spirit of it, working with service areas to try and meet their needs, aiming to strike a balance between holding the line on the TOM and providing a bespoke service. This was exasperated on implementation by a high number of vacancies in the service and more importantly the loss of skilled and experienced admin staff. It seems likely that insufficient preparation in terms of knowledge transfer contributed to dissatisfaction with the service and at times lower than ideal performance. On-going dialogue and negotiation with service areas to define SLAs is still required.

The model was also about the culture change surrounding the way we all work; reducing our dependency on administration support, greater use of self service and adopting new ways of working, all of which would be underpinned by reducing demand. A major success factor of the reduced admin resource was predicated on significant self-service. This has not been embraced across the organisation to the levels required to balance the corresponding deduction of resource. This has to be addressed going forward which will require in some cases improved technology but primarily leadership, role modelling and compliance.

Areas that will need to be addressed going forward:

- Some cultural issues
- Technological issues
- Property issues that will need addressing

We are committed to tackling these issues and working with colleagues across the organisations to continue to develop and mature the service. In addition to the challenging savings targets that BS faces over the next three years, the service will need to be flexible and fleet of foot around the bolder Coventry agenda, recognising that as other services change there will always be an impact on Business Services.

The model that we have has provided us with a solid platform to build on and in particular embracing the ideology and ethos of a Bolder Coventry. In particular, as the Strategic Property Review unfolds Business Services will be able to embrace the new ways of working and realise further efficiencies and savings.

11 Appendices

1. Sickness Analysis

Sickness absence within BS has been a source of concern for the Service and Trade Unions alike. It forms an important part of this evaluation and has been one of the managerial priority areas over the last 12 months.

Context

In the 2011/12 financial year, the sickness outturn for Business Services was 13.71 days lost per FTE which averaged out at 1.14 days lost per FTE per month.

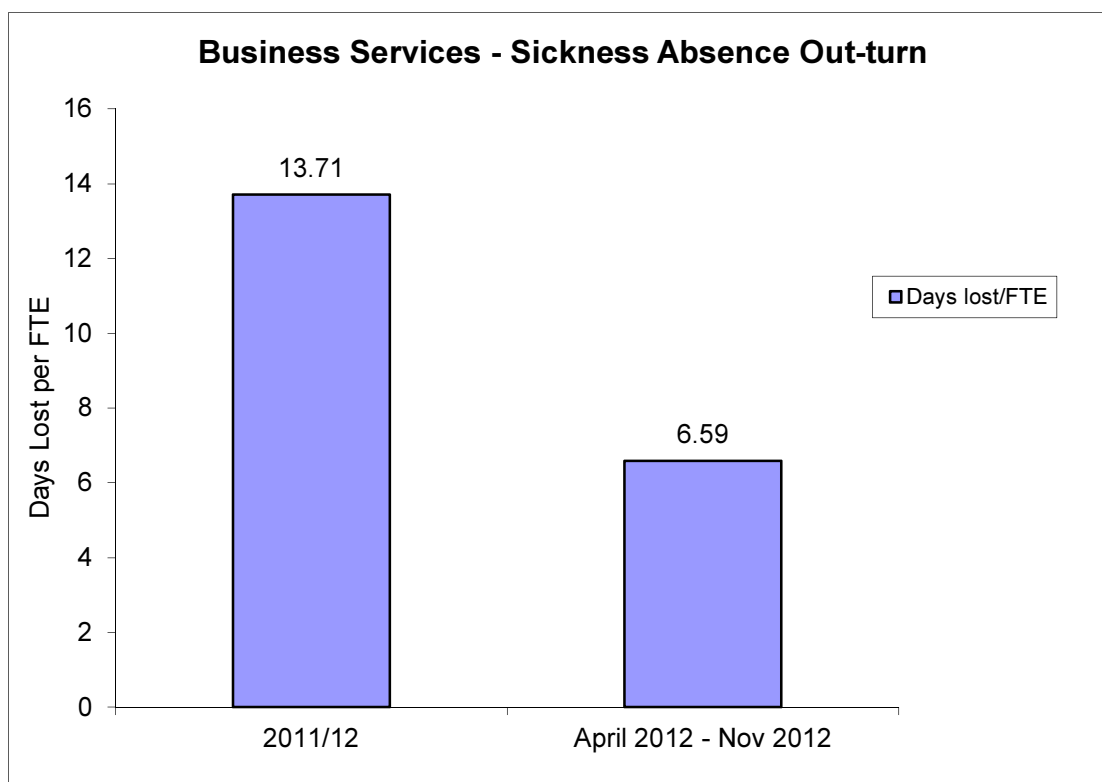
Potential contributing factors

- The ABSS review was the first fundamental services review which had far reaching implications for all staff especially those staff that transferred into the new service. Staff were understandably worried about the impact this would have on their job role/where they would be located and how they would be managed. In some instances, employees were placed in roles where they would have line management responsibility for the very first time
- The period of embedding the new service took longer than expected in terms of line managers and employees 'fitting' into their new roles.
- Prior to employees being transferred to the new service, some cases of sickness were not actively being managed and numerous promoting health cases were transferred over.

Where are we now?

From April 2012 to November 2012, the cumulative sickness out-turn is 6.59 days lost per FTE, which averages out to 0.82 days lost per FTE per month (6.59 divided by 8 months).

Although there are still 4 months left in this financial year, it is clear that significant progress has been made to actively manage sickness and the trend is moving towards the right direction as shown in the graph below:



Actions taken

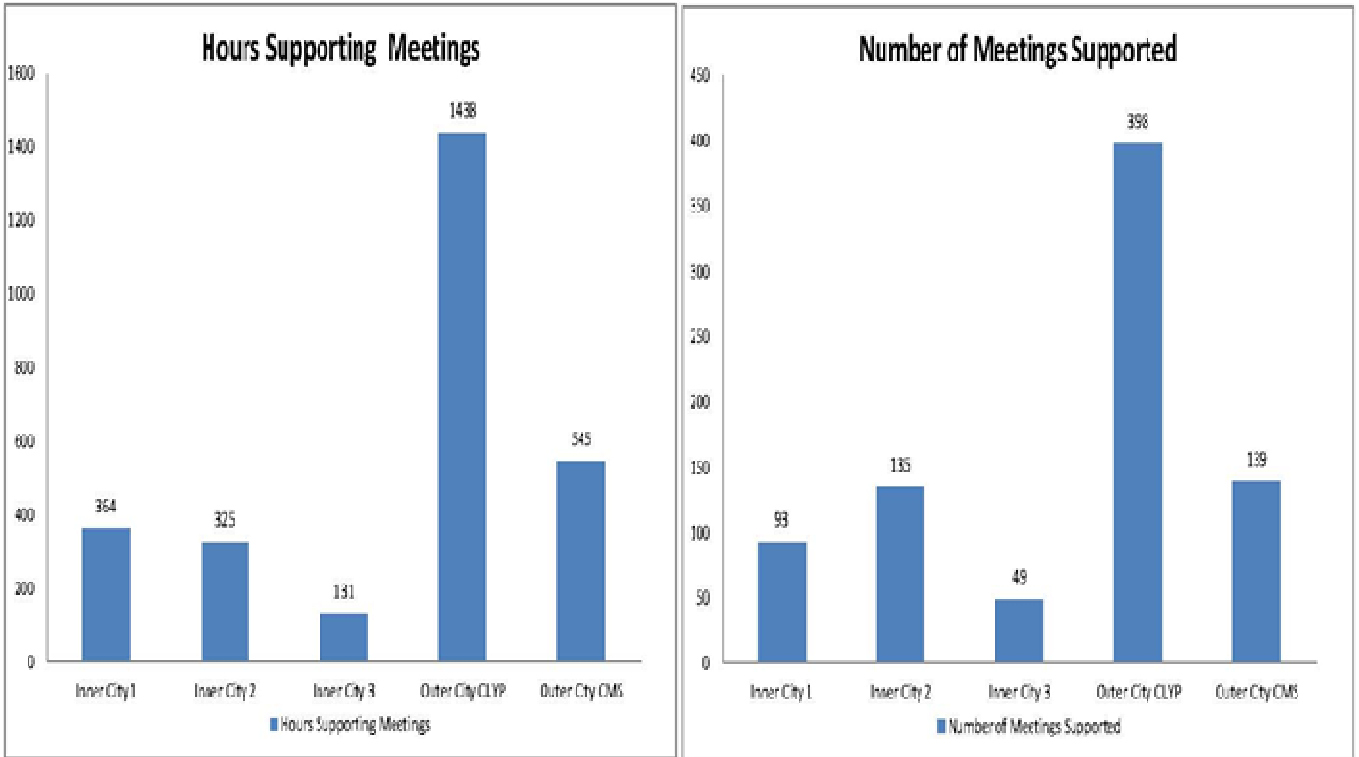
- Led by the Assistant Director and supported by the Health & Well Being Team, a number of briefing sessions were presented to the BS Managers and Supervisors to reinforce the procedures and processes that are in place. For example Return to Work and Promoting Health at Work procedures
- The Assistant Director of Customer & Business Services and the Head of Business Services have engaged with the Trade Unions by sharing information and working together
- Managers and Supervisors are proactively managing sickness cases; rather than waiting for a sickness trigger alert to be sent to them they are identifying when an employee has hit the Promoting Health at Work trigger
- Sickness cases are being managed in a timelier manner and are being progressed through the stages. In the first year alone 218 promoting health at work stage 1 and stage 2 meetings were held and 10 stage 3 meetings

What do we still need to do?

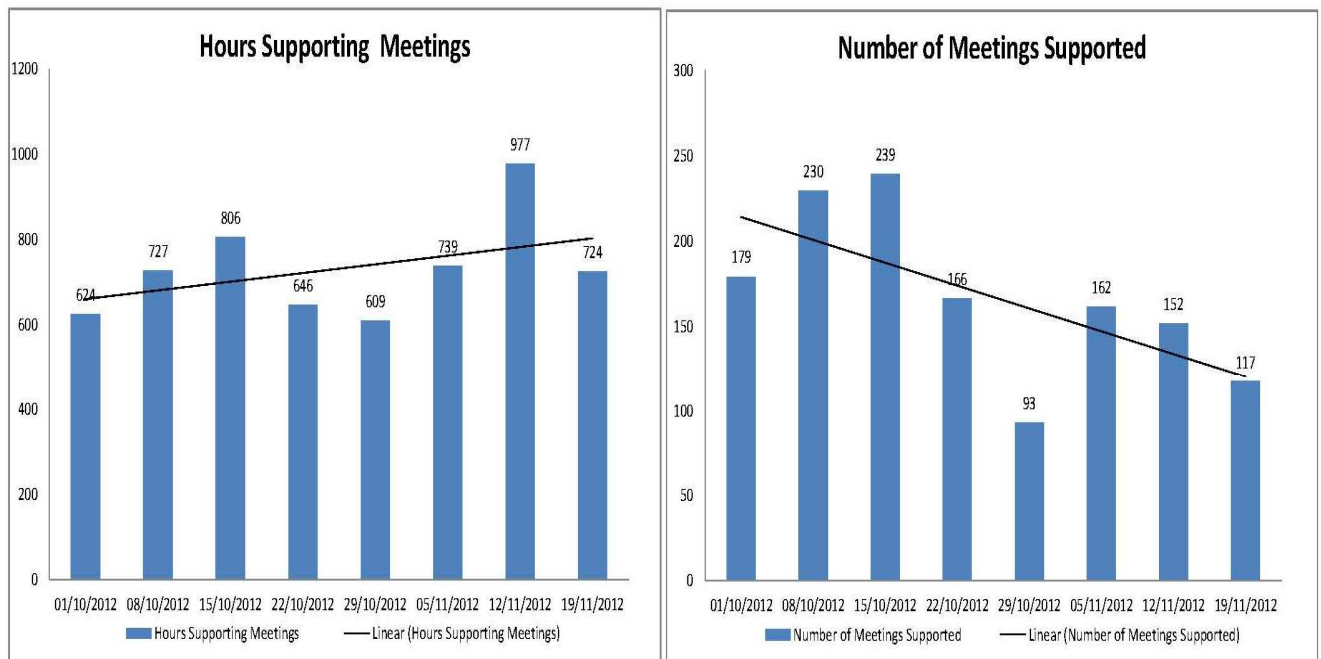
- ✓ The top 2 reasons for sickness absence within the Directorate (including BS) continues to be 'stress' and 'musculo-skeletal disorder'. DSE Assessments/manual handling procedures and other office related health and safety activities are being kept up to date by Managers and Supervisors. A number of 'stretch and flex' sessions have been rolled out across the service and work is continuing with Managers and Trade Unions to highlight any specific areas of perceived stress.
- ✓ Work still needs to continue to embed a culture of attendance and deal with any remaining attitudes in managing avoidable sickness
- ✓ Continue to work with Trade Unions and address issues as they occur

2. BSC Performance Data

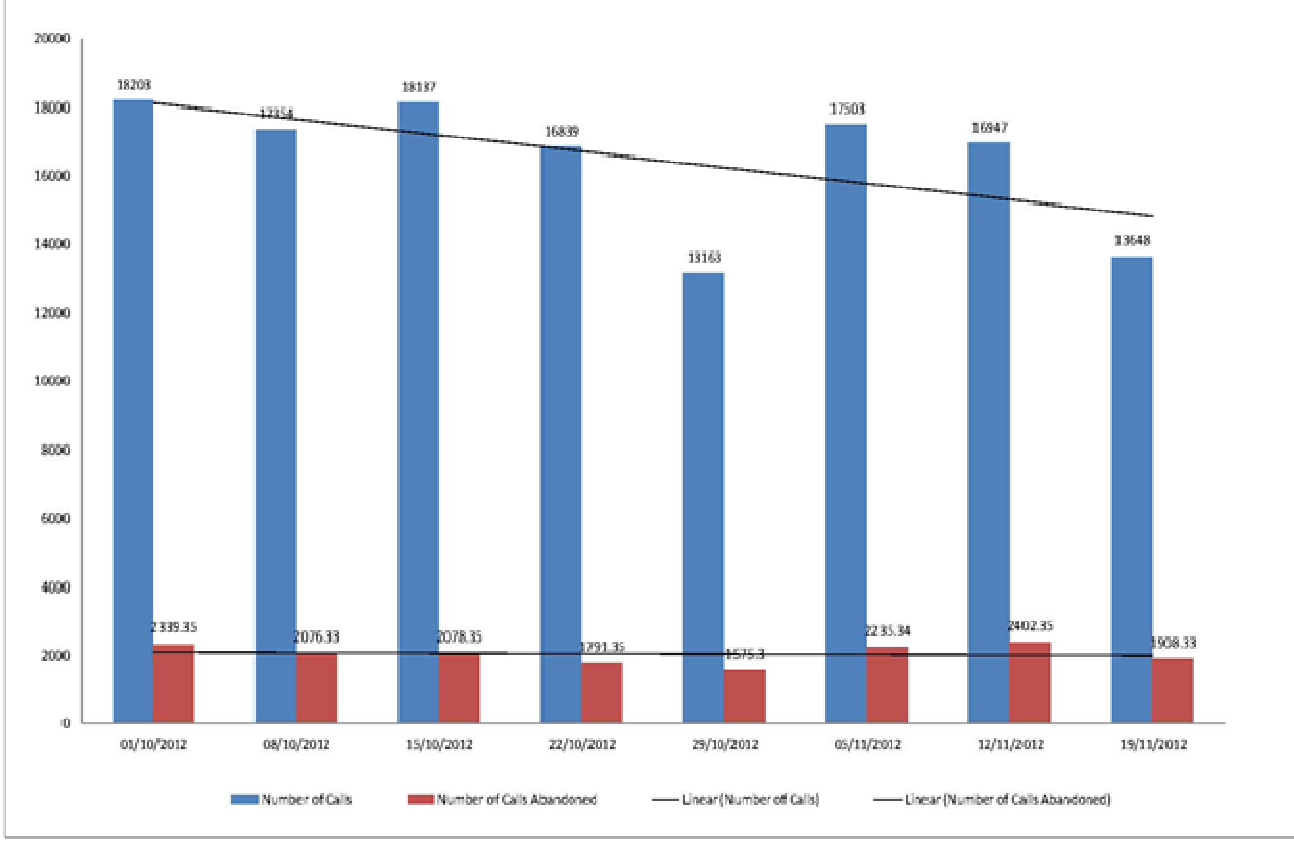
Although BS is operating without a work management system, limited performance data is being captured manually where possible. The graphs below represent an 8 week rolling period (1st October -25 November 2012) and show the time spent supporting meetings. The data clearly shows that there is greater demand in the CLYP and Community Services Directorates.



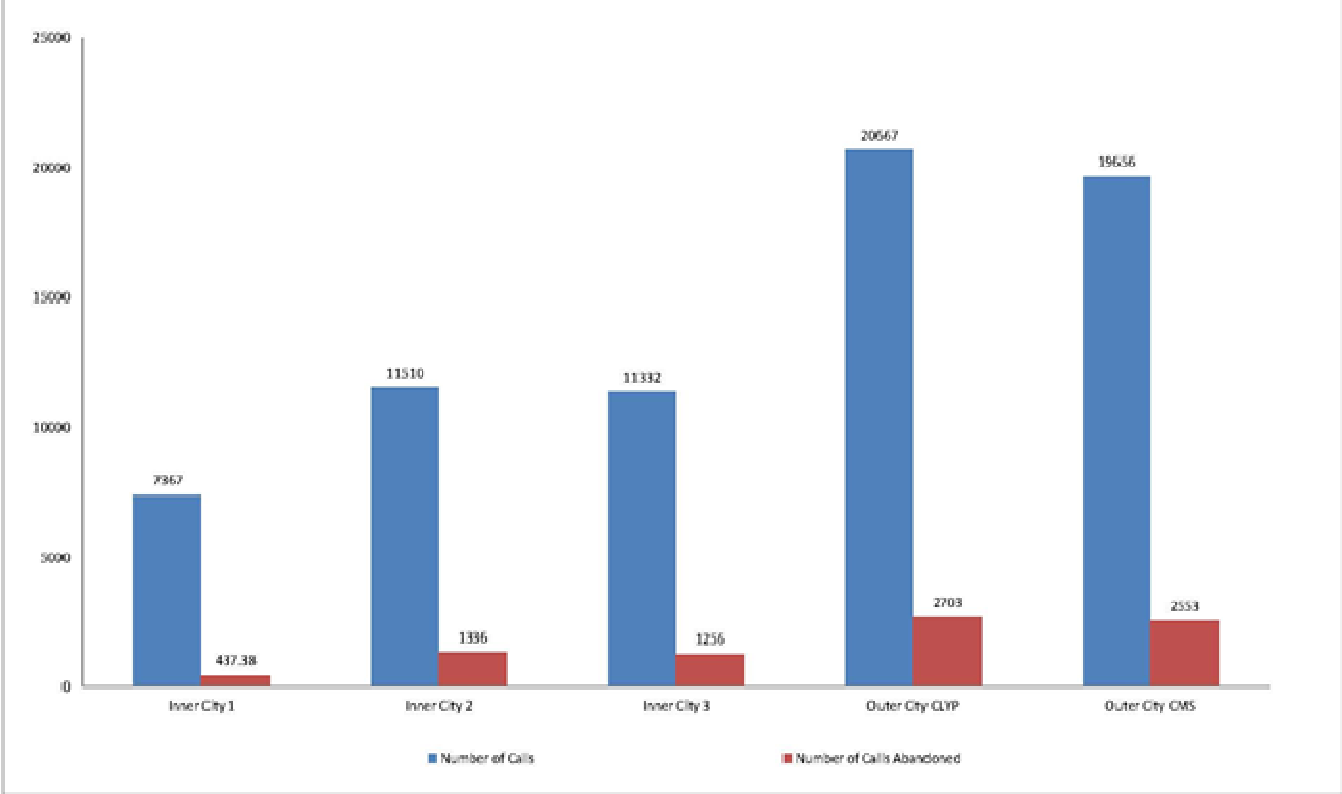
The graph below shows that there has been no real decrease in the number of hours spent supporting meetings although the number of meetings supported has started to decline.



Number of Calls and Abandoned Calls



Number of Calls and Abandoned Calls



3. Training & Development Data

Bespoke Training provided to Business Staff for the period June 2011 –October 2012

| Name of Training Course | Number of Staff Attended |
|------------------------------|--------------------------|
| Customer Engagement | 503 |
| Customer Journey & Procedure | 469 |
| Performance Management | 103 |

Cohort 1 of the Institute of Leadership Management Programme piloted by Workforce Development commencing in April 2012 until December 2012

| Level | Number of Staff Attended | Number of Staff who completed the course |
|-------|--------------------------|--|
| 2 | 13 | 13 |
| 3 | 11 | 10 |
| 5 | 4 | 2 |

National Vocational Qualifications (NVQ) provided by Telford College

| Name of Qualification | Number of Staff enrolled |
|--------------------------------|--------------------------|
| NVQ Business & Administration | 16 |
| NVQ Customer Service | 1 |
| NVQ ICT | 1 |
| Total Number of Staff Enrolled | 18 |

NB: The enrolment of the NVQ Qualification programme recently commenced at the end of November 2012 and it is likely that the number of attendees will rise.

4. Workforce Analysis Update

An Equality Impact Assessment of the Service was conducted in February 2012. The outcome of the review showed that the service was continuing to have a positive equalities impact. There is no requirement to repeat this assessment as part of this report however, as the table below shows there was significant movement of staff during the first year:

Movement of Employees within BS for the period: 1st October 2011 -1st October 2012

| | |
|---|-------------------------------|
| Number of employees who transferred out of BS but stayed in the same Directorate | 76 |
| Number of employees who transferred out of BS and changed Directorate | 21 |
| Number of <u>new employees</u> who joined BS and Coventry City Council | 126 (includes 19 Apprentices) |
| Number of employees who left BS and Coventry City Council | 44 (includes 4 Apprentices) |
| Number of promotions <u>within</u> BS | 41 |
| Number of employees within BS who were promoted into operational areas <u>outside</u> of the service | 17 |

Modern Business Apprentices Update

- The numbers of apprentices have increased from 15 (in December 2011) to 20 (1st October 2012).
- 13 Apprentices are pursuing a Business Administration Level 2 NVQ
- 6 Apprentices are pursuing a Business Administration Level 3 NVQ
- 1 Apprentice is pursuing a Customer Services NVQ
- 2 apprentices have been promoted: one to a Grade 1 post and the other to a Grade 2 post

Sector Based Work Academies Scheme

BS are currently taking part in the Sector Based Work Academies scheme by providing 12 work placements for those people who are ready for work and are receiving benefits. Participants are learning a range of administrative work and are guaranteed an interview for BS vacancies at the end of the scheme. All 12 participants were successful at the competency based interview and at the time of writing one person has achieved a position with BS, with further interviews planned.

5.0 Full Results of Employee and Customer Surveys

Click on the link below to access the full results of the Employee and Customer Survey:

<P:\CXD\Transformation Programme Delivery Board\45 Mtg 10 January 2013>