
Insights on LGR and leadership

Leading through major challenge, reform and reorganisation

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Context

Welcome to Northants Theresa - A Perfect Storm!



Bankruptcy

Northamptonshire County Council

- Issued 2 section 114s
- Council stripped back
- No pay rise for 3 years



Intervention

MHCLG Commissioners

- Best Value inspection
- Commissioners in place and responsible for all financial decisions
- Financial recovery & stabilisation plan



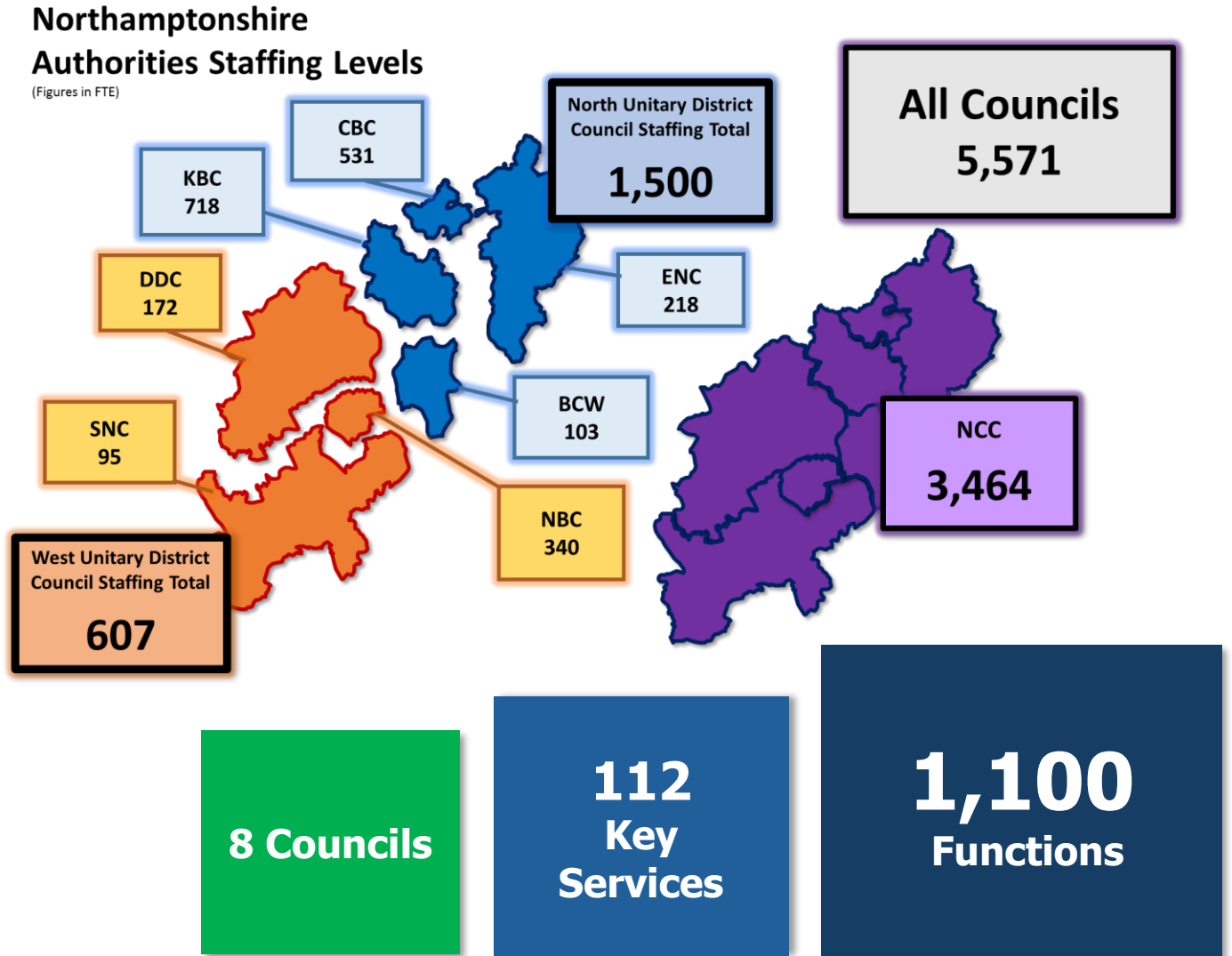
LGR

Future Northants

- SoS forced LGR
- Resentful Districts and Borough Council leaders, officers and members
- Appointed Strategic Delivery Director to oversee the split & get consensus

Starting from a low base – a big task

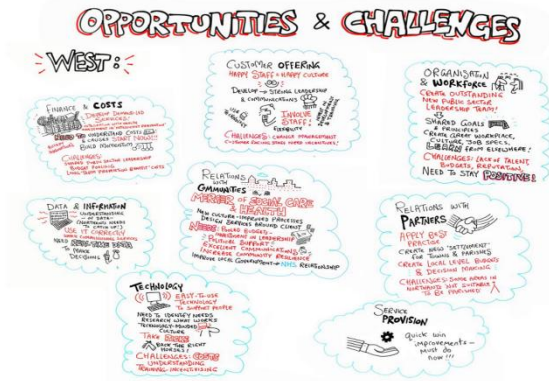
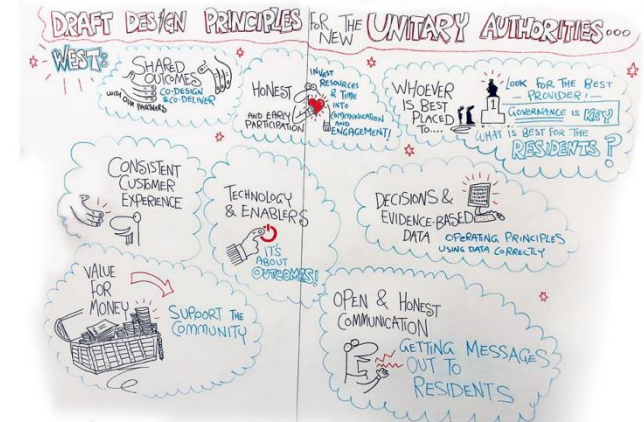
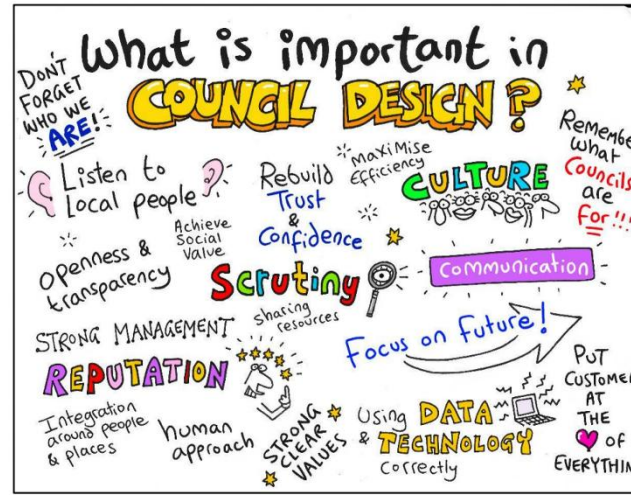
- Creation of two large unitary councils
- Over £1bn of services
- TUPE Over 5,600 staff
- 800 systems
- 1000s of contracts to transfer
- Over 300 elected members
- 8 head Office locations
- Creation of a separate Children’s Trust
- Integration of health and social care
- Repatriation of externalised back-office services
- Implementation of four core IT systems
- Pre Vesting Day transformation
- **Fix a bankrupt County Council!**



Our Journey

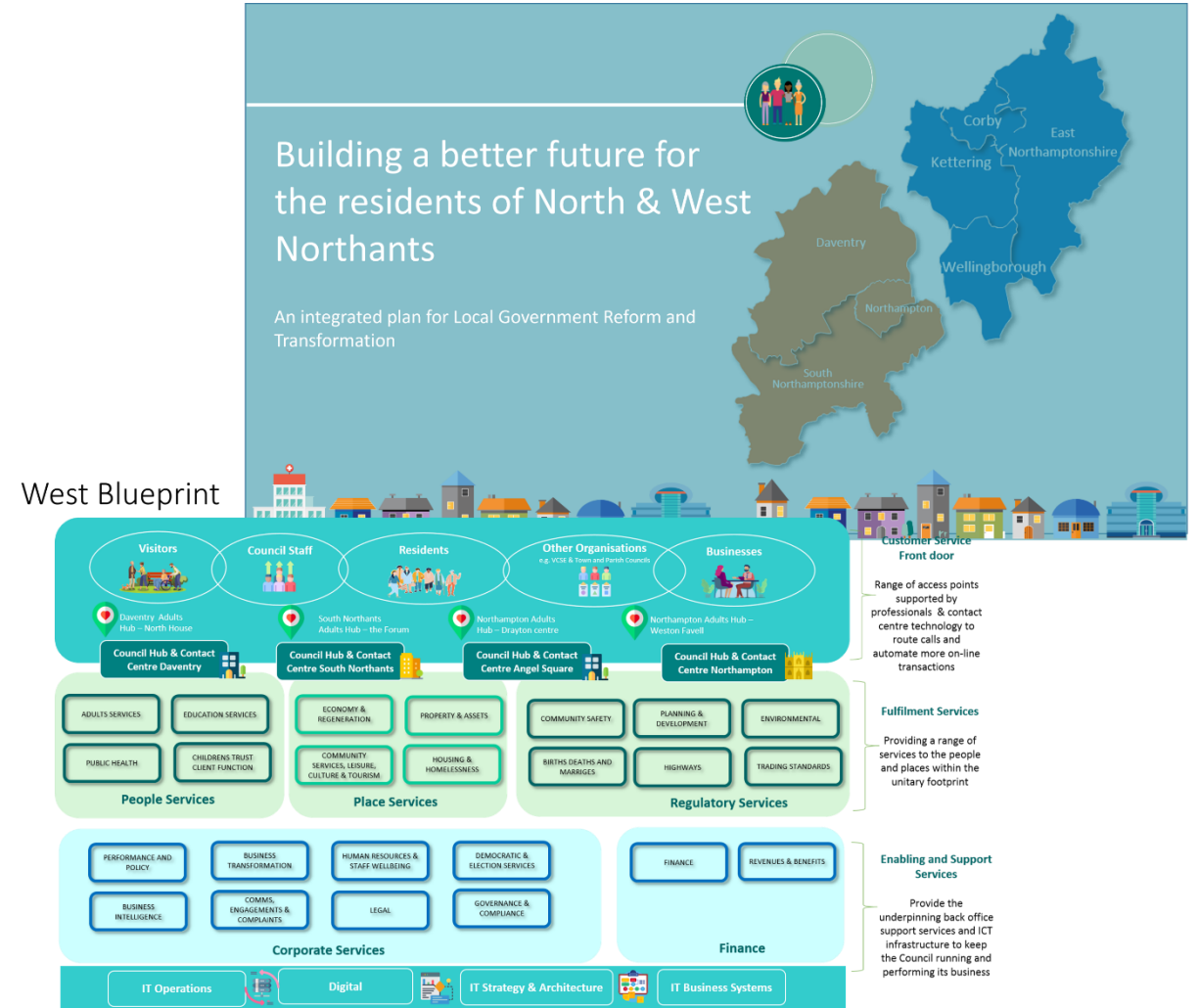
Create a consensus – the Vision

- Regardless of how you got there – create a sense of purpose, ambition and understanding of what its all for
- 200-member workshop – “what a good council looks like” visioning and design principles
- Member involvement was sustained throughout our journey – Leaders board, members workshops and working groups



Create a consensus - the Goal

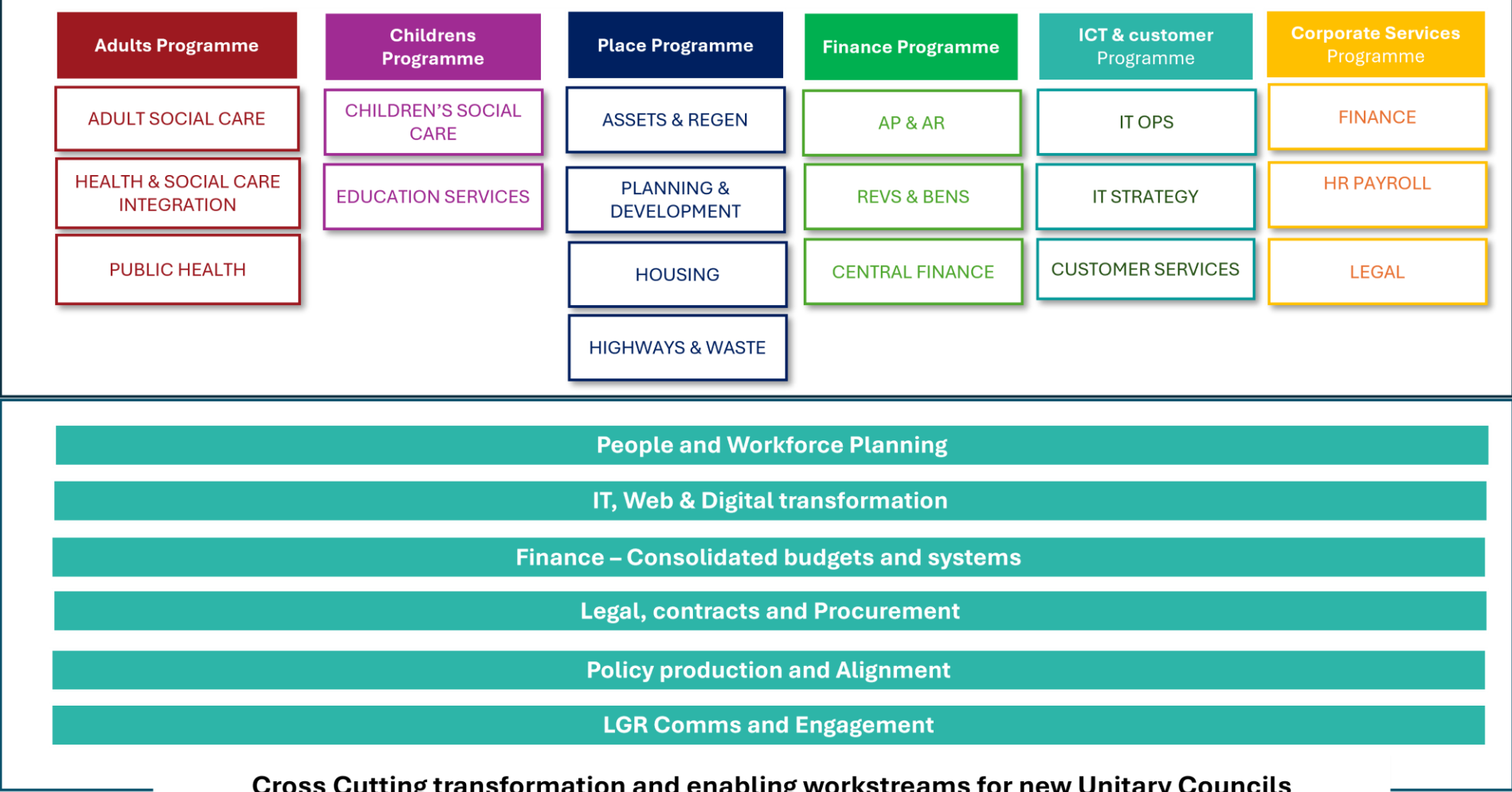
- Create early understanding of where we were heading, what will be different and better and plan of how we will get there
- Our **prospectus for change** – shared case for stakeholders on why, what, how and the outcomes we wanted to achieve in the new councils
- Our new **Council Blueprints** - how we would operate, and services would come together
- Service Blueprints – how our services would operate, what would change on day 1 and transformation route map
- Staff involvement throughout



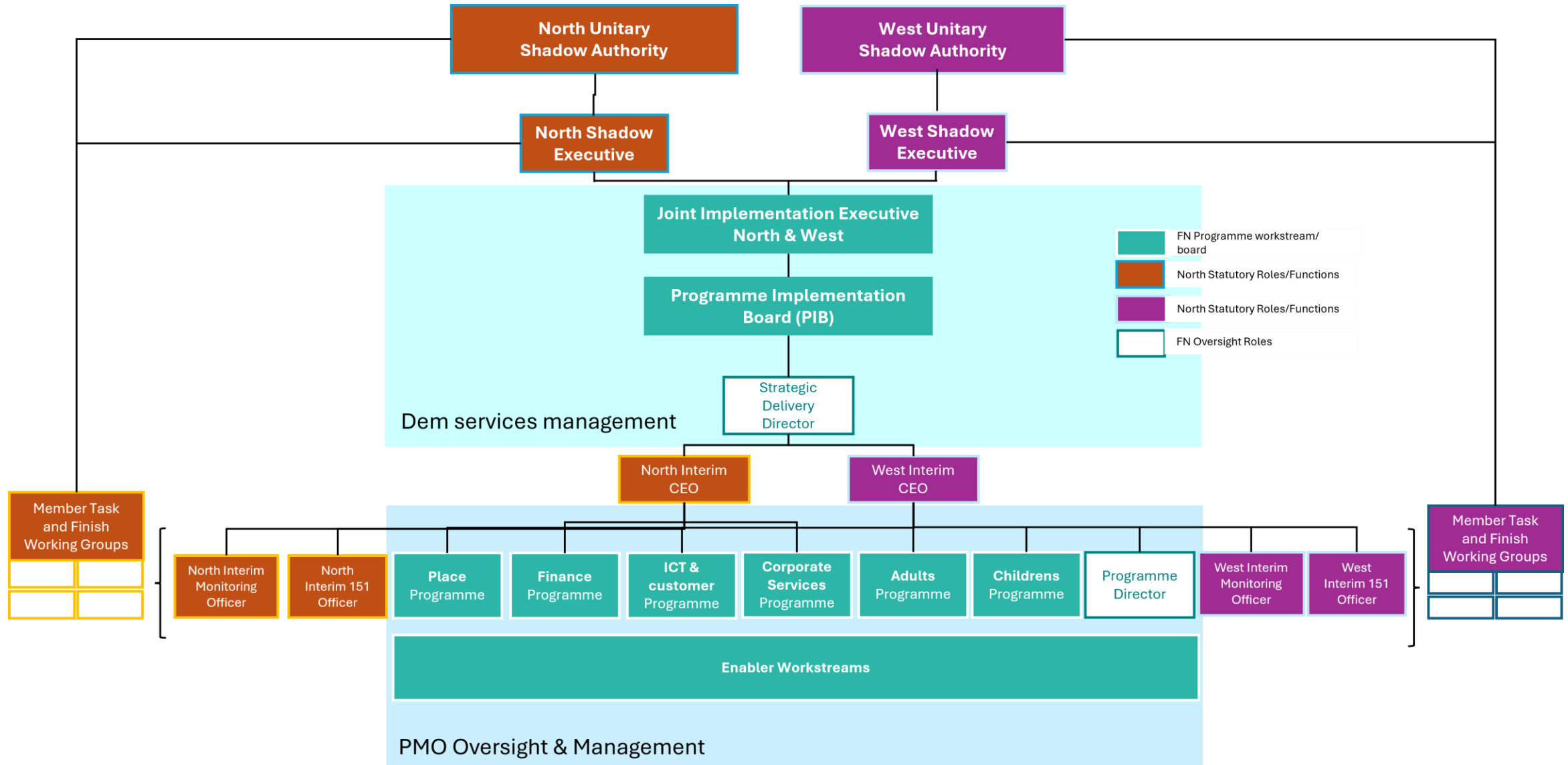
Programme – designed to build trust

Creating Buy-in

Day 1 Delivery Programme – EACH WITH A CHIEF EXECUTIVE AS SRO



Single Programme structure



Bold ambition Big Return

- LGR PLUS!
- Drive change and better outcomes not just safe and legal
- Make the future Councils sustainable
- County Council transformation - **savings £50m**
- LGR transformation – **savings £35m**

Cost of Integrated LGR Programme Delivery Plan

LGR Programme Cost (summary) - £19m

Programme management

Spend to date (1.5m)

Interim/ subject matter expertise backfill

NCC Disaggregation/ LGR Programme Costs

Legal Advice/ Employment Law Costs

Restructure Costs

Senior Shadow/ Unitary Team Appointments

Unitary Branding/ Re-Signage

Programme Contingency

Comms / Web/ File Storage

NCC Transformation Programme - £6.5m

New Models of Social Care

Demand management and prevention

Children's and Adults New Operating models

Commissioning and contracts reductions & renegotiation

Specialist Housing and Accommodation

Equipment and Technologies

LGR Transformation (examples) - £18.9m

ICT Infrastructure & Licences

Locality Working

Service Pathways & Process Redesign

National Pay & Conditions/ Agile Workforce

Consolidation of Shared Services and service portals

Community wellbeing Hub Development

Integrated Customer Access Points

Contracts Review & Savings Plan

New Policies development

Social Worker recruitment and retention

Website/portals digital investment

Total Bill - £44.56m

LGR is a long Journey with a lot to do!

- Day 1 Safe and Legal action plan – 500
- 16 theme areas
- COVID struck half way through – adapt and reset
- Blended team – led by Council staff – emerging superstars
- Supplemented by external expertise where needed
- 200+ change champions



BASELINE AND DUE DILLIGENCE

Work to ensure that staff, budgets, systems, contracts, buildings, assets, policies and liabilities are understood before we design our new Councils



BUDGETS & FINANCE

To oversee the budget preparations and Medium-Term Financial Plan for each unitary authority and split of liabilities, loans, balance sheet and debt



DISAGGREGATION

to determine how Northamptonshire County Council services and their related budgets will be split to the new unitary authorities.




COUNCIL GOVERNANCE

To oversee the development and delivery of the governance arrangements for both the shadow and unitary councils, including committee structures.



DAY 1 ACCOMMODATION

To ensure the unitary authorities have the required accommodation to meet their safe and legal responsibilities from Day One.



DAY 1 STRUCTURE & TOM

Creation of a blueprint setting out the staffing and functions that would come together and where they would sit



SENIOR APPOINTMENTS

To ensure that agreed leadership structures and statutory officer appointments are in place for the unitary authorities.



INNOVATION & DIGITAL

Key new critical systems Adults, Finance, systems that joined up customer contact, new websites and MS365 rollout



COMMS & ENGAGEMENT

To oversee the development and development of an engagement plan for staff, union, customers and stakeholder .



VISION & CULTURE

to establish a high-level vision and values statement for each unitary authority..



TRANSFORMATION

To develop a programme to drive transformation that's embedded in officers' and members' day jobs in the new organisations.



COUNCIL TAX HARMONISATION

to develop a process whereby within an agreed period, council tax rates in all areas within a unitary authority will become the same.

Leading & Managing Change

Engaging your colleagues on the journey

- Consistency and co-ordination key
- Familiarity + visibility = reassurance
- Cascade comms through existing channels where possible
- Communicate the timeline and milestones
- Use comms to tackle myths and assumptions – particularly made by D&Bs
- **Make change feel good**
- Involve and engage to bring people on the journey – Change Champions
- Fill the comms vacuum, reduce the rumour mill
- **You can never have too many FAQs!**



Change is emotional and structural

- **Recognise where everyone starts their journey**
- District & Borough council staff and members were resentful
- County staff fatigued by s114, commissioners and Council cuts
- Different locations
- Different ways of working and modernisation stages
- Different pay & conditions and perks
- Some staff thrived in a complex programme - future career success
- Some people **longing for change**
- Some **longing for nothing to change**

Managing change from within

- Early decision to staff and lead the programme with internal staff
 - Greater ownership
 - Being part of exciting change
 - Less cost
- External consultants kept to minimum
- Strategic Delivery director from County – no future aspiration
- Each programme workstream headed by a chief Exec of Ds & Bs
- Front line staff heavily engaged to ensure two-way feedback via 100+ change champions
- Senior staff stepped up to lead specialist areas in the programme – ownership of the future - Backfill in the day job
- Tier 3 managers critical in the last 3 months before vesting day, they will be needed to work on the detail and preparing their services to go live

Delivering on the LGR promise

Stability During Uncertainty

Leaders must provide stability and clear communication during periods of uncertainty to reduce workforce anxiety.

Strong Governance

Make decisions but ensure transparency and fairness.

Maintain Pace

Increase the pace and productivity – call to action – lead from the front.

Maintaining Service Performance

Ensuring uninterrupted service delivery requires risk management, continuity planning, and performance oversight.

Collaborative Leadership

Successful reform depends on trust and partnership across political and organizational boundaries.



Reflections

LGR lessons and Tips

- Be clear about the direction of travel and how the process will work from the start.
- Get agreement on the single operating model as soon as possible in the process.
- Understand the strengths and weaknesses of each Council.
- clear on the areas of improvement that will be offered – something to aim at.
- Consider a section 24, to limit entry into late contracts/disposals that bind the new council or create last minute liabilities, handcuffs or loss.
- Recognise earlier the vital role of ICT.
- Seek specialist advice or SME help if members or senior officers not exposed before to County Level services or District services.
- Government support – monthly progress meetings and Statutory instrument mainly.
- Statutory instrument and existing legal constructs for dealing with assets transfer, contracts etc and where a Council will hold or lead responsibility on behalf of both initially.



Continuing the journey - New Council - strong foundations

Leadership

Visible/ collective ownership, accountability and leadership of good governance at senior political and managerial levels

Governance

Effective oversight, cross cutting work embedded, robust decisions, tracking and benefits realisation

PACE

Continued momentum of transformation and improvement and a relentless focus on delivering what you promise



Culture & Comms

Supportive collaborative Culture of 'can do' – transparency no matter how tough it gets

Collaboration

Collaborative approach between Members and Officers to problem solving & plans

Partnership

Effective joint working and engagement with Partners. Stakeholders and business – building confidence

Was it Worth it?



Single point of contact

Simplified pathways for residents and business – they'll always know who to contact.



Clearer accountability

One authority accountable for all the services provided.



Improved services

85% of KPI better than pre vesting day. Only those impacted by COVID lagged



Integration

Joined up services up to improve outcomes and reduce cost – e.g. care leavers housing, adaptations and discharge.



Regional collaboration

Using existing expertise to make future services better for everyone across the county.



Holistic service

A single view of customers, debt and need that helps the council and the customer.



Shared Expertise & Skills

Skills and experience combined and shared to better effect, e.g. people commissioning, market shaping, HB subsidy.



Data & Analytics

Combined data and information creates richer picture for evidence-based decision making, population inequalities and predictive analytics.



Increased buying power

A single authority stronger and have a larger voice both regionally and nationally. £115m of savings in 4 years.

Questions

