

Committee(s): Barbican Residential Committee – For Information Barbican Estate Residents Consultation Committee – For Information	Dated: 22 January 2024 27 November 2023
Subject: Barbican Estate Transformation Programme - Update	Public
Which outcomes in the City Corporation’s Corporate Plan does this proposal aim to impact directly?	4,8,9,10,12
Does this proposal require extra revenue and/or capital spending?	N
If so, how much?	N/A
What is the source of Funding?	N/A
Has this Funding Source been agreed with the Chamberlain’s Department?	N/A
Report of: Judith Finlay, Executive Director – Community & Children’s Services	For Information
Report author: Scott Myers, Strategy & Projects Officer	

Summary

This report updates Members of the Barbican Residential Committee & Barbican Estate Residents Consultation Committee on recent progress made on delivering the actions set out within the Transformation Programme action plan.

Recommendation(s)

Members are asked to:

- Note and comment on the direction of travel

Main Report

Background

1. An action plan has been developed to capture all the recommendations from the Altair review and to demonstrate progress against each action with timescales.
2. The delivery of the action plan is overseen by the Barbican Estate Transformation Programme Board which has been meeting on a fortnightly basis to review progress. Recently, the Programme Board has moved to a monthly meeting schedule. In addition, there are associated workstreams focussing on distinct areas of service improvement which are also being captured within the plan.

Current Position

3. Since September 2023, progress has been made on key aspects of the delivery of the Barbican Estate Transformation Programme, as well as expanding the capacity for delivery within the Transformation Team.
4. The below sets out progress made since our last update in September 2023.
5. All the actions within the Transformation Programme Board remain on track to their agreed timescales. These timescales remain under review as we re-design the action plan.
6. As the transformation programme action plan is currently being re-designed it has not been shared alongside this paper. However, a copy of the action plan will be distributed during the meeting and circulated to Members of both committees as a supplement following the meetings.

Interim Service Improvement Manager for Programme Delivery

7. To provide additional resource to the Transformation Programme, an Interim Service Improve Manager has been recruited on a temporary 6-month contract, which has provided the programme with additional capacity, as well as being a key member of the Transformation Programme Board.
8. The Interim Service Improvement Manager has responsibility for developing and scoping the programme's action plan, which has been developed and based on recommendations set out in the Altair review.
9. The Interim Service Improvement Manager has also begun developing specific workstreams for programme delivery, which include cost and risk management assessments, as well as estimated times of delivery.
10. The Interim Service Improvement Manager has been supported in part by the Programme's Strategy & Projects Officer.

Recruitment

Assistant Director – Barbican Residential Estate

11. Recruitment of a new Assistant Director - Barbican Residential Estate has been progressing to timescale.
12. Potential candidates were approached by the appointed specialist executive recruitment agency, and a longlist of candidates has been developed.
13. Following longlisting of candidates, a shortlist of candidates will be interviewed by an interview panel of Officers, elected Member and resident representative on the 4th of December, with a successful candidate starting in post as soon as possible.
14. Following the departure of Paul Murtagh (Assistant Director – Barbican & Property Services) in October 2023, Pam Wharfe has been appointed as Interim Assistant Director – Housing and is covering the Barbican aspects of this post.

Communications

15. The Transformation Programme Board highlighted improvements needed in the way residents and staff are kept informed regarding programme progression and discussions had at programme board meetings.
16. It was proposed that a sub-group responsible for communication with residents and staff be set up. Membership of the group is made up of relevant members of the Transformation Programme Board, as well as a Communications & Engagement Officer.
17. The sub-group will develop and 'sign off' on all communications to residents and staff related to the programme, as well as being the editorial board of the weekly Barbican Estate Bulletin.
18. The sub-group's main aim is to streamline and improve all important communications issued, as well as ensuring an agreed and unified message.
19. The sub-group agreed and published a 'special' transformation programme bulletin on the 10th of November setting out progress and next steps.

Staff workshops & wellbeing

20. The Barbican Estate Office have been running a series of workshops with staff to discuss recent developments and give them the opportunity to answer questions related to elements of change within the programme.
21. Staff have submitted a number of questions which have been answered through the development of an 'FAQ document'. Further workshops with staff are planned to be held shortly as a way of following up with staff and keeping them informed.
22. Additional focus on the wellbeing of our staff within the Barbican Estate Office. The City Corporation's Wellbeing Advisor has been meeting with staff on a one-to-one basis and providing additional support where required.

Barbican Residents Meeting

23. As part of our efforts to keep Barbican residents up to date with our plans for delivering the transformation programme and current progress to date, an all-residents meeting was held at the Barbican Centre on the 12th of October.
24. 160 residents attended the meeting, where they heard from Officers and Elected Members on our key objectives and priorities for delivering change, as well as a summary of our action plan.
25. Residents were also given an opportunity to take part in a question-and-answer session, where they were able to ask questions relating to the programme. Where Officers did not have answers for specific questions, we will be publishing a response to questions document to be included in a future Barbican Estate Bulletin by the end of November.

26. A video recording of the meeting was published on the City Corporation's YouTube channel, and a short survey was circulated to attendees of the meeting to gauge usefulness of the meeting, as well as collecting feedback on topics discussed and ideas for future engagement.
27. As of the 13th of November, 23 residents have responded to the survey, with 15 of the 23 respondents finding the session 'useful' or 'very useful'.

Service Charge Audit

28. Work is underway to deliver an audit of the service charge systems and processes.
29. The work will be carried out by an appointed external Chartered Accountant.
30. Work is ongoing in consultation with the Service Charge Working Party to identify the scope of the work going forward.

Action plan redesign

31. Following the appointment of an Interim Service Improvement Manager, considerable work has been undertaken to refine and improve the programme's action tracker. These initial draft changes have been commented on by the Transformation Programme Board's resident representatives, with a view to finalising them within the coming weeks.
32. No changes to the scope of the actions have been made. However, refinement of the programmes workstreams have been completed, as well as further developing the more granular actions needed to deliver each workstream have been included.
33. This re-design will allow for greater focus and clarity relating to governance steps for each workstream as progression is made. It has also allowed for greater identification of timescales for each workstream, and improving clarity around resource and delivery timescales, which are still being developed.
34. The action plan is an organic document that will be continually updated as the programme progresses.

Corporate & Strategic Implications

Strategic implications – The improvement of the quality-of-service delivery to residents of the Barbican Estate is an important priority for the City of London. The external and independent review by Altair has provided a thorough evidence base of priority areas for transformation. The oversight and scrutiny of delivery of actions against the recommendations within the governance structures will involve both members and residents, increasing accountability and providing assurance to the wider resident population of the Barbican Estate.

Financial implications – The transformation action plan will be supported by a change management programme, which may have future resource and financial implications, dependent on the options which may be pursued. As part of the regular updates on progress against the action plan, the BRC & RCC will be fully consulted and appraised, prior to any changes being implemented.

Resource implications – See ‘Financial implications’.

Legal implications – None identified

Risk implications – None identified

Equalities implications – None identified

Climate implications – None identified

Security implications – None identified

Conclusion

35. Progress on delivering the Transformation Programme Action Plan remains on track, and progress has been made since the last update provided to the BRC and RCC. Work will continue over the coming months to deliver the workstreams and further updates will be provided to staff, elected Members and residents on a regular basis.

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