

Housing Transformation Project

Committee name	Residents Services Select Committee
Officer reporting	Mark Billings, Housing Director, Place Directorate
Papers with report	None
Ward	All

HEADLINES

This report provides information relating to the Housing Transformation work that has taken place in the Housing Needs Service over the last six months.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

That the Committee:

- 1. Notes the contents of the report**

SUPPORTING INFORMATION

1. As part of Hillingdon Council's vision to continue delivering improved outcomes in Hillingdon, in Autumn 2021 PwC completed an assessment of current ways of working within housing using an Operational Excellence framework. In July 2022 PwC introduced Perform Plus in the Housing Management, Housing Needs Service and Private Sector Housing Service this went live on 1st August 2022. The intention was to pilot this in housing with the potential to roll out to other service areas. This report is focused on the roll out of Perform Plus in the Housing Needs Services – Housing Options and Homeless Prevention and Resettlement and Lettings.

Perform Plus

2. Perform Plus is a coaching programme that optimises what managers and their teams do and how they do it. It is a behavioural change approach that drives performance improvement and develops capability to create an environment of continuous improvement. The approach focused on coaching teams to adopt new working practices and providing them with improved capabilities and tools. Perform Plus builds engagement and empowers staff to be more productive, adopt new ways of working and new technologies to better serve customers. Over 14 weeks from August to the beginning of November 2022, elements of Perform Plus were incrementally introduced to teams through on the job coaching via PwC week by week, supported by the online Perform Plus platform. Together, these elements create a system that becomes the common way of working, driving ongoing connection and performance improvement. The programme supports cultural change and the online platform makes it suitable for hybrid working arrangements. In addition, one Hillingdon Change Agent was trained as a Perform Plus Coach and ensure sustainability of the programme at Hillingdon.

3. The approach involved:

- Launch events for all staff to provide an introduction to the Perform Plus programme
- Weekly training sessions for Team Managers and Seniors from all teams to understand each Perform Plus element of the methodology
- Weekly cascade sessions delivered by Team Managers and Seniors to their teams, to understand each Perform Plus element and what it means for them
- One-to-one coaching for Team Managers from a dedicated Perform Plus coach to put each element into practice
- Bespoke Perform Plus platform to act as a central hub for each team, through which performance can be managed and communication is enabled
- One Hillingdon Change Agent trained as a Perform Plus coach, with experience coaching teams autonomously

The Perform Plus Journey

4. As part of the development of perform plus each team each team identified a vision, success factors and the solution and enablers to achieve success. The teams developed a problem solving tracker, best practice guides and 100 day delivery plans.
5. The tables below summarise the journey through Perform Plus for the Housing Options and Homeless Prevention Service and for the Resettlement and Lettings Service.

Housing Options and Homeless Prevention Service	
Vision	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Team vision. ‘Empowering service users through the interaction of product and services to achieve the best housing outcomes for our residents’ • Working together on this helped to align the team around their shared vision and purpose and allowed the team to collaboratively agree a clear path for action going forward
Huddles and visual management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The team agreed a set of KPIs to help track progress towards their vision including a mix of demand metrics such as ‘number of HODs (Homeless on the day) seen’ and activity metrics including ‘number of assessments’ and ‘number of case closures’. Discussing these metrics in huddles alongside daily priorities has helped to provide greater visibility of workload and accountability of performance across the team. • Huddles have also encouraged the team to regularly share and celebrate their successes, helping to boost team morale and shift the team ethos around recognition -“I used to struggle to know what to put as we’re all just doing our jobs...now I get it and it’s nice to feel like all our hard work is actually appreciated”.
Problem solving	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Huddles and cascades have provided the team with dedicated time and space for open discussions and problem solving. The team have been empowered to feel confident and capable in raising problems and working together to implement solutions. • In addition to ad-hoc problems raised and solved in huddles, the team

	worked through a number of key problems including the number of emails, number of H-CLIC errors and disjointed team working within the service, helping to alleviate common frustrations and reduce the time spent working on admin.
Best practice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The team developed 3 best practice guides including: a checklist for homeless duty enquiries, managing client expectations around temporary accommodation and private sector offers, working closely with the Lettings & Resettlement team on this third guide. Creating these best practice guides has helped to reinforce the best practice approach, facilitate knowledge sharing, and if used consistently will help to reduce variability in outcome and quality over time.
Planning and Performance Driving	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Team leadership reflected on the 24 KPIs tracked across the 3 huddles and identified 'number of B&B bookings completed' and 'number of case closures' as two priority KPIs they really wanted to drive within huddles. This helped the team set focused daily goals, have targeted KPI discussions in huddles and have a better understanding of how they can work together to drive performance.
Coaching and capability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The development of the team skills matrix and use of team cascades for training has helped to build capability and encourage peer-to-peer coaching and knowledge sharing across the team. The team also looked for opportunities to maximise the value of their monthly 1:1s, with Seniors agreeing to regularly discuss wellbeing, performance and personal development in addition to complex cases going forward.
Operating Rhythm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The team added recurring 'rocks' into their diaries to block out time for lunch, duty and working on case closures, helping the team to prioritise their workload and manage their time more effectively -"I didn't think rocks would work but I blocked out my calendar this week and it was surprisingly helpful and I was much more focused"
Celebrating Success	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The team have pledged to continue sharing success stories in huddles, organising monthly Spotlight challenges and celebrating hard work at the quarterly service meetings to help drive motivation and ensure the team feels their hard work and strong performance is recognised by the Council.
Key focus areas in the 100 day plan	
Workload management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To continue progress in this area over the next 100 days, leadership should encourage the continued use of 'rocks' and reiterate the importance of respecting other people's focus time. Blocking out time for key priorities and a lunch break will help Officers to plan and manage their time more effectively.
Coaching and development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To address this, Seniors should continue to use the 1:1 best practice guide and ensure they have 'rocks' in the diary to protect time for monthly 1:1s. Cascade time should continue to be repurposed for training, and peer-to-peer coaching should be encouraged amongst the team.
Team morale	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To improve morale, the team should continue to look for more opportunities to celebrate success and have fun as a team. Embedding

	their celebrating success pledges, finding time for team building, and incorporating additional suggestions from the team will help drive up team morale.
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Resettlement and Lettings Service	
Vision	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Team vision. 'To help those in need with a stable home' • Designing this helped give a sense of purpose and direction to the team to work towards their shared goal of putting their residents first
Huddles and visual management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Huddles gave the teams an opportunity to regularly touch base and catch up with one another - "I used to have to go round individually to catch up with my team but this has made it so much easier to keep organised". • Both teams were incredibly engaged with their huddleboards, with Lettings sharing 182 successes, 94 communications and 63 problems, and Resettlement sharing 135 successes, 48 communications and 46 problems. Huddles provided the team with a platform to regularly share their successes and adopt a more active approach to problem solving.
Problem solving	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Whilst problems were addressed regularly in huddles, problem solving sessions were used to tackle more complex problems - "this is brilliant, this is such an easy way to address problems". • Both teams identified various forms they use on a day-to-day basis that could be rewritten to save time, improve accuracy and increase capacity. These problems included; void control form, B&B memo form and medical letters. • The biggest impact was the rewriting of the resettlement statement, which is now called the 'Personal Move On Plan', simplifying the document from 12 pages to 7.
Best practice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Lettings team developed 3 guides including a customer journey map which involved a number of different teams and was created to help their clients understand the housing processes. Resettlement focused on creating a suitability checklist to improve their viewing process • The Seniors also teamed up with Seniors from Housing Options and Homeless Prevention to create best practice guides on the Role of Duty Manager and Private Sector Offers. It was beneficial for them to work cohesively to understand the 'best' and consistent way to do these across the differing teams, with Seniors sharing what works well for them with one another.
Planning and Performance Driving	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Team Leadership identified their key performance indicators that would be used to measure the important metrics within the different roles in the teams. These are discussed on a weekly basis, allowing the teams to plan around demand and drive performance by supporting one another. • Resettlement key KPIs include: number of discharges and number of shortlife let • Lettings key KPIs include: housing register processes complete,

	number of properties let and number of tenancy reviews signed
Coaching and capability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The team identified areas of strength and areas for their development as individuals, allowing them to identify areas for development in the team and anywhere they could remove the single point of failure. The focus was on how the teams can best share knowledge and improve peer-to-peer coaching. This helped promote a more open culture within the teams where people can upskill one another, raising the overall skill level of the teams - "I would like everyone to have an understanding of everyone's role, this can be beneficial as they all feed off each other in their own roles and give them ownership" At the start of Perform Plus, 50% of the team felt that leadership actively encourage us to take action that supports individual and team well-being, however, at the end that number grew to 80%.
Operating Rhythm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The team embedded 'rocks/' into their diaries to block out focus time for important activities, such as duty, emails, collecting keys and completing visits, helping the team to prioritise their workload and manage their time more effectively.
Celebrating Success	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The teams were really positive and engaged with celebrating success, being the team with the most successes shared across the entire service. Both teams pledged to continue sharing successes in huddles and also to flag good performance and behaviours up to the tiered huddles.
Key focus areas in the 100 day plan	
Huddles	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maintain momentum with huddles; tailoring the huddle approach to ensure the team make regular time to continue to problem solve, and extend one huddle a week to address KPIs reflecting on the questions: what's going well and where can we improve?
Coaching conversations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This can be in 1:1s, huddles or on the job. To ensure this, continue to identify training opportunities and use the Wednesday cascade time to build team capability using the skills matrix to highlight areas for development
Diary management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Encouraging the use of rock time in diaries and respecting other people's rocks. Ensuring the Officers have protected time means they can focus on the core aspects of their roles, plan and manage their time effectively.

6. At the end of the period working with the housing teams a final report from PwC has provided positive feedback on how Perform Plus has enabled teams to improve their working culture. A staff survey across all housing teams at the end of the process confirms:

- 20% increase in the number of staff that agree their team regularly recognises and celebrates success (42% up to 62%)
- 84% of staff agree their team communicate effectively as a team (16% increase)
- 80% of staff agree they feel part of a team that delivers their works
- 15% increase in the number of staff that agree their team has a shared vision (54% up to 69%)
- 78% of staff agree they openly discuss workload as a team

- 83% of staff agree their team works well together
- 10% increase in the number of staff that agree their team regularly raises and discusses issues affecting the delivery of their work (68% up to 78%)
- 54% of staff agree that Huddles have improved their communication and sense of team
- 87% of staff agree they are clear about the purpose and value of their work
- 76% of staff agree they have the opportunity to suggest ways to improve how we work
- 14% increase in the number of staff that agree their team regularly spend time looking for ways to improve what they do and solve problems effectively
- 81% of staff that agree they feel supported by their team
- 8% increase in the number of staff that agree that everyone in their completes the work in the same way, following best practice (46% up to 54%)

Sustaining Progress

7. To sustain progress, it is imperative that leadership drives forward the next steps in addition to the team-level expectations. Leadership support is crucial in driving sustainability. The following expectations have been identified for the Housing Leadership Team and are reflected in the Leadership Team’s own 100 day plan.

Expectation	How can leadership embed these expectations?
Leadership clearly communicate expectations around the new ways of working “It’s how we work”	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clear messaging upfront that there is no opting out and the leadership are committed to continuously improving ways of working and culture in Housing. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Reiterate the messaging that Perform Plus is the way of working and everyone has responsibility and a part to play - it doesn’t just stop once PwC’s involvement ends. • Progress should be recognised and well communicated <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ e.g. Posting on huddle boards to share progress updates and celebrate key milestones/successes; responding to flagged posts.
Leadership and Seniors support and drive the right behaviours “We also act like this at the top”	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Senior leadership must role model the right behaviours for their people to follow <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ e.g. Being present in huddles, coaching, problem solving and best practice guide development are all done frequently and to a high standard. • Governance must be in place so that sustainability/ continuous improvement plans continue to be built on High performance and hard work is celebrated by leadership and low performance is dealt with in a timely manner, with support provided where required.
Continued investment “We will commit ourselves & our time”	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Perform Plus is designed to be an intensive continuous improvement method and success is dependent on time investment by Managers and Officers <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Ongoing review of what is and isn't working for Managers is required. ○ Remind the teams that there will be 100 day sustainability plan checks-in therefore they are accountable for actioning what they said they would do.

<p>The service area consistently track data and benefits “We track and own the benefits”</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Perform Plus aims to improve performance against operational KPIs, this requires a robust baseline of performance and a working method to track performance <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Throughout the programme, coaches have been working closely with the teams and leadership to track data – this needs to be continued as best practice. ○ Leadership must be accountable for tracking KPI performance and taking action to ensure the behaviours on the ground work to deliver results.
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How this report benefits Hillingdon residents

The quality of housing service delivery has significant impacts on the lives of residents.

Financial Implications

There are no direct financial implications resulting from the recommendations of this report.

Legal Implications

None at this stage

BACKGROUND PAPERS

Nil.