

Appendix A: Towards a Future Direction for Slough Borough Council

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Why we need to set a future direction for the Council (operating model)

Current operating model (ways of working) is not sustainable

We need to consciously decide how Slough Borough Council operates

We are working in an incredibly challenging financial context with increasing future demand from our residents - we are running out of road

Society is also changing rapidly – we don't want to drift into different ways to respond to this.



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Building on our corporate plan 2023-2027

This is the opportunity to show how:

- We can run the council well and make good decisions
- Be forward thinking about how we meet future needs, trends and demands

And embed the approach set out in the corporate plan about the **type of Council we wish to be:**

- Resident focused
- Providing financial sustainability
- Enabling residents and communities
- Strengthening partnerships
- Building trust

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What we've done so far

Summer 2023 – Spring 2024: Commissioners instruct council to develop a new operating model and work begins

Spring 2024: Draft concept prepared with approval from CLT to proceed

Summer 2024:

- Hosted 70+ hours of directorate-focused workshops/meetings (17th June to 19th July)
- Outline concept for operating model developed and tested with CLT as part of Phase 1
- Developed the conditions for success
- Began TOM Phase 2, with end-to-end review of service delivery right across the Council at its heart

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What the Council needs to look like

- **Smaller and more flexible - operating out of fewer buildings**
- **Offer fewer and more consistent points of access, getting things right first time**
- **Take a digital first approach in how we work**, freeing up time for those who need it
- **Focus on doing the basics well** - “One Council” approach
- Using **Council resources appropriately**
- **Enable or commission other activity through partners and communities**
- **Take a commercial and value-for-money mindset**
- More **aware and accountable for our statutory duties, but not restricted to them**
- **Better able understand, prevent, and manage demand. - tackling root causes to support prevention and early intervention**, and encouraging **behaviour change** of residents to do **more for themselves**
- **Prioritise what we deliver-** ensure it is targeted and triaged **to protect the most vulnerable**
- **Focus on shaping Slough the place**, to build sustainable prosperity for all

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What the Council needs to look like

Summary	Examples of areas of further exploration
Smaller and more flexible - operating out of fewer buildings	Smaller footprint of buildings SBC currently operates from (e.g. Observatory House and Depot). Assessing what this means for other buildings the Council operates out of and for the services contained within them. Exploring community run assets.
Offer fewer and more consistent points of access, getting things right first time	Currently offer up to 8 different means of access for our residents. This is confusing and inconsistent for our residents, so how do we rationalise this? One single electronic point of access and one hard front door for the most vulnerable?
Take a digital first approach in how we work , freeing up time for those who need it	Giving consideration to how we help those who are able to do more for themselves the opportunity to do things online (e.g. book venues). For example, only 62% of Slough residents pay CT online – average for other Berkshire Councils stand at 78%. Also focus on internal automation to integrate efficiency into our processes
Focus on doing the basics well - “One Council” approach	Making sure our staff are empowered to make decisions to put things right first time for residents, or introduce them to a person sitting in the right part of the Council – improving resident experience
Using council resource appropriately	Funding what SBC should be funding – ensuring other partners are able to share costs, make fair contributions and meet their financial obligations to us
Take a commercial and value-for-money mindset beyond income generation	Ensuring we recover all costs the Council is entitled to reclaim and ensuring we are able to generate income or reclaim fees from those who can pay. Ensuring we reclaim appropriate costs from our partners and do not subsidise commercial activity

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What the Council needs to look like

Summary	Examples of areas of further exploration
More aware and accountable for our statutory duties, but not restricted to them.	Consistently delivering to a good standard what we are legally obliged to deliver for residents of Slough but taking it further to focus more on prevention or early intervention, anticipating future demand needs.
Better able understand, prevent, and manage demand.	Understanding and tackling root causes to support prevention and early intervention (e.g. homelessness and temporary accommodation demand)
Prioritise what we deliver - ensure it is targeted and triaged to protect the most vulnerable	Being able to look at what the Council continues to do, and to prioritise these in collaboration with community groups (e.g. building on where we are well positioned, or ensuring we can demonstrate value for money for residents)
Enable or commission other activity through partners and communities	Co-designing targeted and triaged responses to protect the most vulnerable. Ensuring that we build on good practice already in place in ASC/CSC, and adopting approach right across the Council.
Focus on shaping Slough the place, to build sustainable prosperity for all	Improving opportunities for our residents (job creation, better quality housing, more attractive place to live) and creating environment to build prosperity in a sustained way (e.g. increase job opportunities, skills training, etc.)

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What this means for how we work

This will require our **more flexible and agile workforce to be equipped and enabled, and demonstrate desired behaviours:**

- **Better informed by data and insight**
- Ready to continuously **improve the services we offer to our residents**
- **Empowered and enabled to resolve issues** first time
- Supported to work in a more **outward facing way** – in partnerships across Slough and the region
- **Equipped to triage, focus on independence and empowerment** and have the delegated authority to refer and introduce residents to our partners
- In clearly defined accountable roles with the **right skills** and who can work flexibly to be in the **right place at the right time** and who **consistently demonstrate high-standards of desired behaviour**
- Able to work in **ready partnership to proactively support residents who they refer or signpost**

Need to build on **pockets of good practice in partnership working and in resident engagement** to help residents remain independent for as long as possible and empowered to help themselves.

Operate across the borough and region to proactively work with partners to **tackle root causes to support preventative and early intervention** as well as work to **improve Slough as a place** to improve health outcomes

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What the benefits are for our residents

- Taking a “One Council” view – focused on doing the basics well
- Work effectively with partners and communities to respond to need – referrals over signposting
- Consistent access - adapted to needs (triage approach)
- Adopting a “tell us once” method – and determined adoption to get things right first time
- Easier to track progress
- Using digitisation to free up time for those who need it – and to improve the customer experience
- Tackling root causes – not being prepared to take a superficial view
- Protect the most vulnerable
- ‘Shaping Slough’ - the place to improve well-being and promote healthy outcomes

Conditions for success – how we work

- Financial stability
- Effective support services
- Vision, strategy, and democracy
- Strategic commissioning
- Strategic communications
- Organisational intelligence
- Positive Culture and Behaviours

Conditions for success – how we work

Stable financial foundations	Financial resilience and stability is key to being able to develop an operating model that can be developed in phases in the next few years
Corporate Services	Standardised and consistent processes to support the Council in operating effectively on a day-to-day basis , taking advantage of economies of scale. Freeing operational staff up to do what they were employed to do.
Strategic & democratic core	Brings together the key capabilities of the Council to define its strategy, priority aims and vision , and manage/support the delivery and monitoring of those aims through a golden thread of KPIs. It will help the whole Council to think ahead and adopt a horizon-scanning mentality to identify risk, anticipate demand, and to flex to meet those changes.
Strategic commissioning, procurement, contract & performance management	Setting a strategic context through partnerships and co-design what we want to facilitate/deliver within Slough. A consistent framework of strategic and operational business processes through which the Council makes decisions about what it will deliver to achieve its strategic objectives , and how it will deliver and manage those products/services. This includes commissioning, de-commissioning, procurement and contract/performance management – ensuring these are aligned from end-to-end and regularly reviewed to assess best value.
Communications	suggests our partners and staff are only too aware of the challenges being faced by the Council and are waiting for SBC to proactively engage with them. A large-scale exercise to map our primary stakeholders is currently being undertaken at pace involving staff right across the Council.
Organisational intelligence	Provides information, intelligence and insight to/from a range of customers including businesses, partners and staff within the organisation, to create a single version of the truth, based on data that is of robust quality. It will prove to be an enabler for transparent decision making across the Council based on evidence.
Positive Culture and Behaviours	Developing a flexible workforce who are proud to be part of the Slough family, are proactive in their pursuit of positive outcomes for the residents of Slough, and who consistently demonstrate behaviours that contribute to a “One Council” view, and work with partners to deliver a “One Slough” approach.

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Conditions for success – communities and place

- Strong resilient communities
- Good resident experience of accessing the council
- Effective service delivery
- Partnership working
- Equality Diversity, Inclusion
- Economic growth and devolution

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Conditions for success- communities & place

Strong and resilient communities	Residents, communities, partners work together to build resilience in communities , empowering residents to support themselves and each other, and creating opportunities in communities and helping to build trust and reach into diverse communities. It also helps build good community relations and cohesion.
Resident access & management	Access point for customers (residents, businesses, partners) that gives a consistent customer experience, service and outcomes across all channels. It uses information intelligently to give a holistic view of the customer, and to decide whether and how services are provided using rules based-assessments that are robust and transparent
Effective service delivery	More limited range of services directly delivered by Council staff and instead proactive engagement with communities to indirectly support residents through commissioned partners/providers to residents and businesses.
Partnership Working	SBC can no longer afford to work the way it does, nor deliver everything it currently does alone, and neither is that likely to be the best model for public service. SBC needs to shift towards more enabling and convening and proactive engagement with our partners across sectors to develop longer-term relationships towards shared goals. It will be about working with our communities and potential partners. It could mean co-design, co-production, co-location and co-delivery.
Equality Diversity, Inclusion	By proactively taking action to inequality, eliminate discrimination and bias and build community relations , we will be better able to meet and anticipate needs support prevention and early intervention, get things right the first time and ensure effective reach. All aspects of the operating model will also need to be grounded in detailed analysis on the impact of proposals on Slough's residents.
Economic Growth and devolution	An economically prosperous place that benefits residents will help build our business base and revenue, enable residents to be more financially resilient and bring investment that can help the town be more vibrant and sustainable.

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Key Dates

Now:

- Directorate-focused workshops to capture data
- Develop project and delivery plans

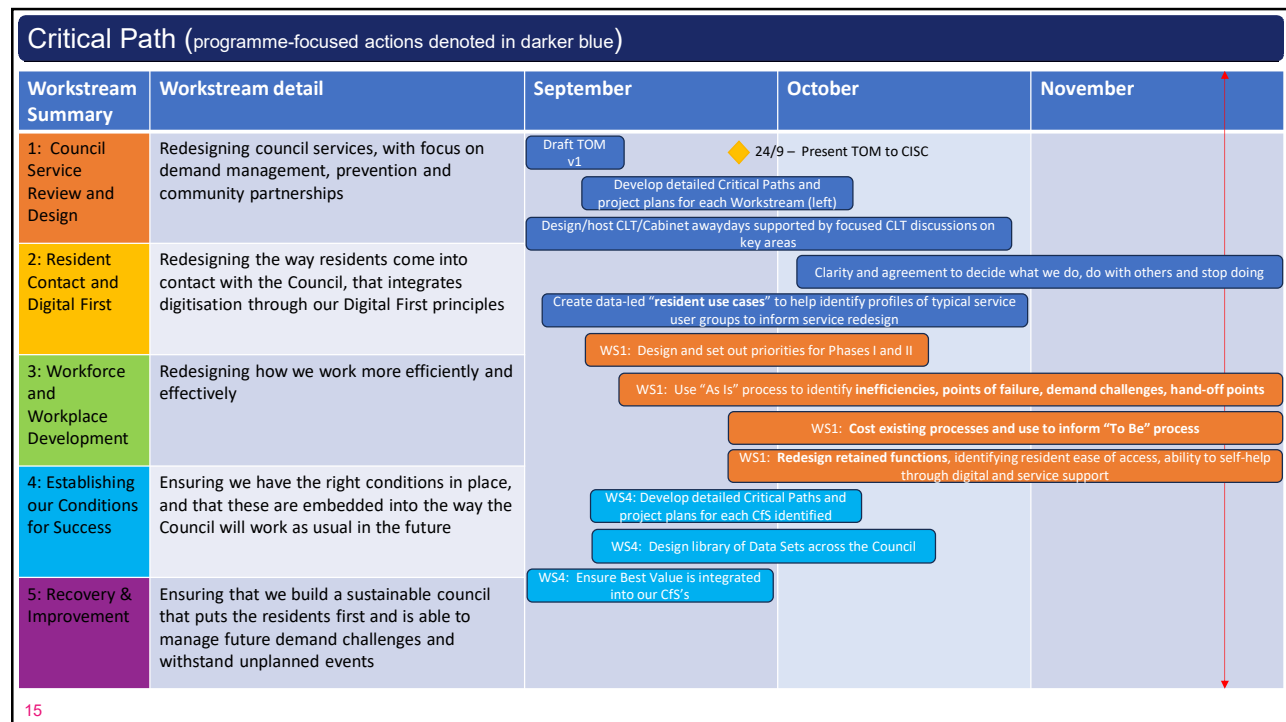
Autumn/Winter

- Member involvement and political processes
- Engage with staff and residents
- Align with MTFP and Star Chambers – and design/implement Design Authority
- Commence Phase II of the TOM and initiate council-wide end-to-end service reviews

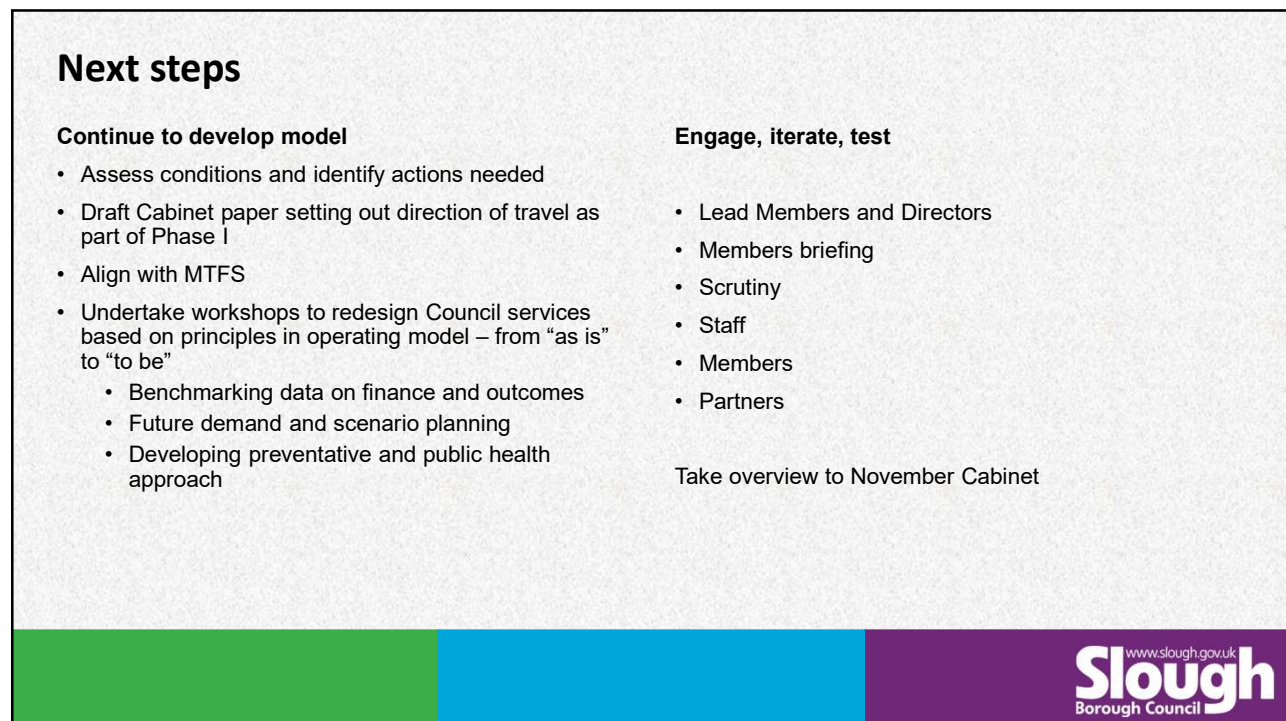
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- Move to implementation stage

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Additional Background

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What we have done so far – a chronological roadmap

Date	Activity
2023-24	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> July 2023 Commissioners instruct Council to develop new TOM December 2023 Commissioner's letter critical that no progress made on development of TOM January 2024 Recovery Programme reset – TOM ideas developed and shared with CLT February 2024 Option to pursue external support for TOM rejected by previous CEO. Decision to progress 'in-house' via current team.
Apr	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Roadmap for TOM shared with CLT, IRB and Transformation Board that proposed setting course for smaller council footprint (Tesco Main Store v Tesco Express) = smaller resident offer, focus only on basics, smaller staff, overall footprint and resources = lower costs
15 th May	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Approval to proceed with TOM given by CLT – convened cross-cutting working group (finance, HR, ICT/Digital, data/insight, etc.)
21 st May	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Inaugural TOM Weekly Delivery Group – initiated work to gather basic data against each of the Council's main functions in order to develop a single view map of the Council. Purpose was to use Map and identify which functions would be continued to be delivered (by us or partners) and which functions would be stopped (potential to deliver immediate savings) Designed "As Is" and "To Be" workshops. Approved by CLT
28 th May	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identified SPoCs for each of the Directorate Workshops. Invitations to workshops circulated following approval from CEO to SPoCs asking them to submit nominations for workshops. Shared workshop design. Workshops to run from 17th June to 19th July. CLT informed and updated
4 th June	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> TOM Weekly Group chaired by CLT Member. Six Themes identified as focus for improvement in Phase I of TOM following discussion Presentations given at DLTs and Operational Leaders Forum to explain more widely what the TOM's purpose is and get staff feedback.
17 th June to 19 th July	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Workshops take place for each of the Directorates (Children's, Adults, SCF, and Public Health/Protection). Workshops pivoted from "As Is" and "To Be" towards focusing on delivering additional savings. First of pivoted workshops chaired by Marc Gadsby for ASC.
July	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Facilitated themed workshops with leads. Rationale was to highlight areas where structural changes could provide service level improvements and efficiencies leading to savings. Focused on developing case for change versus current ways of working alongside operational and financial challenges. Ideas for developing proposed new ways of working that will support conditions for success
6 th August	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Development of slide pack for CLT. Drafting of TOM narrative document setting out more of the detail

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Key Dates – completing initial phase

Date	Activity
August 24	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fully analyse and synthesise data from workshops – and use it to inform Council-wide end-to-end service reform.
August 24	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recruit TOM Team to build capacity and capability – particularly development of audit trails and planning future work-flows
Aug-Sep 24	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop substantive TOM narrative and include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evidential data that underpins and supports the proposed direction of travel the priority actions and early wins validate what the conditions for success are work with finance and the services to provide informed indicative costs versus investment versus benefits Develop detailed project and delivery plans for the next 12 months leading towards the end goal This will further inform the draft TOM leading up to Cabinet and consultation/engagement
Aug-Sep 24	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Design VSM process to establish end-to-end, Council-wide services: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> existing processes identify early wins, likely cost implications, savings and efficiencies likely over next three years demand management processes and key benefits
Aug-Sep 24	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Design and launch a Design Authority to review and approve all redesigns and restructures.
Aug-Oct 24	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop background material and KLoEs for consultation and engagement process in November/December (work closely with Comms)
Sep-Nov 24	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Draft iterations of Cabinet report to support emerging TOM document and Present TOM to Cabinet in November
Nov-Dec 24	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Public consultation and engagement process in full swing

Key Dates – towards implementation

Date	Activity
Sep-Nov 24	Work with finance colleagues to set aside funds for a Test and Learn model that can seed-fund new ideas to spin them out of the TOM project and its practice. Link this to the Design Authority process
Oct-Nov 24	Establish process to quickly and clearly define what functions we are going to continue to offer as a council, what functions we are going to continue to deliver through partners, and what functions are we going to stop <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish cost versus savings analysis – benefits statement
Oct 24 to Mar 25	TOM BA and Project Team to continue to work with services to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop detailed end-to-end service process mapping to establish definitive “As Is” across the council Create “resident use cases” to help identify profiles of typical service user groups – use to inform “To Be” process Use “As Is” process to identify inefficiencies, points of failure, demand challenges, hand-off points, etc. Cost existing process Propose which functions and processes need to be continued, passed on to alternative providers and which are stopped Link above to analysis of evidence/data for each function to establish demand management forecasting and scenario planning Redesign retained functions, identifying resident ease of access, ability to self-help through digital and service support. Use VSM techniques to measure effort, cost, time, etc. within process map to identify savings achieved Utilise “One Council” view to see how functions and processes can be aligned to improve resident experience and drive out further efficiencies Design Authority to review detailed and fully costed business cases for leadership/political approval and sign-off. Business cases to include equality and resident impact analysis and detailed implementation plans Approved business cases to go through process of consultation/engagement and revised where necessary Move to implementation stage following final approval