

# Commercial Business Unit Plan Executive Summary

## Business Services Plus (BSP)

## Who We Are

Business Services Plus is a £20m business delivering a wide range of professional services across HR, Finance, ICT, Property Management, Customer Services and Business Support. We are a customer-focused, entrepreneurial business with big ambitions. We provide operational, consultancy and transformation services to a wide range of customers, including local authorities, schools and academies, colleges, small businesses and charities. We have a 'best of breed' operating model, delivering some functions internally and out-sourcing specialist services such as PSN and Property Maintenance. The Business Unit is a lean and efficient one – just 7 pence in every pound the organisation spends goes towards support services, which benchmarks highly competitively against local authority peers.



John Chilver  
Cabinet Member for  
Resources



Gill Quinton  
Business Enterprise  
& Business Services

## Our Mission Statement

In providing services, the Business Unit will be commercially minded, focused on customers, quality and transforming the business through digital technologies. A new improved approach to account management will ensure that the needs of our customers are prioritised in the design and delivery of services. The Business Unit will also identify new services and products which are saleable to a wider range of customers in order to deliver greater value and reduce the unit cost to frontline services. In considering how best to provide the services needed by customers all options will be appraised in terms of their value for money including in-house delivery and external delivery. We will achieve this goal by demonstrating our core values of Accountability, Ambition, Care, Collaboration.

## Achievements

- Delivered cumulative savings of £16.8m since 2008
- Delivered £1.75m of savings in 2015/16
- Generated an additional £413k of traded income in 2015/16 over and above our 2014/15 performance
- Developed a pipeline of work to deliver £2.25m savings over the next 4 years
- Successfully commenced the implementation of a Shared HR Service with London Borough of Harrow Council

## Current/Future Landscape

Over 5 years (2015/16-2019/20), BSP anticipate taking £4m from its operating budget, and in the next two years BSP plan to save £2.25m from it's budget; this represents a 10% reduction in 2 years. BSP recognise this is a challenging time for all parts of the Council and intend to continuously improve our service offering, allowing the Council's frontline services to deliver ever increasing value for money.

In addition to reducing the size of our budgets, we also project opportunities to generate more income by selling our services to customers both in and out of Buckinghamshire. We hope to increase our external income by a further 5% over the next two years.

# Our Business Unit Priorities

We are focused on six priorities for the continued transformation of our business:

- **Developing more shared services** with likeminded partners
- Finding the **most efficient way of delivering services to customers**
- **Being more commercial** by generating income and diversifying our customer base
- Creating efficiencies through **smarter ways of working and new technologies**
- Delivering **the tools for staff to do their jobs** efficiently and effectively
- Enabling the organisation to **meet our current and future recruitment challenges**

## What does good look like?

- Delivery of a further £2m of savings by 2020
- Additional net annual income of £441k by 2017/18 (against 2015/16 baseline)
- We will have retained a dominant market presence among our core customer base of schools and academies in Buckinghamshire
- Our presence in the London market will be enhanced by our landmark shared services partnership with Harrow Council
- We will have completed the implementation of our shared HR service with Harrow and will be looking for new shared opportunities both with Harrow and other partners

## Customer Experience

- About 25% of our operating budget is generated externally from schools, academies and other partners such as other local authorities, the fire authority, small businesses and charities
- 81% of our external customers are within the education market, with the vast majority being schools and academies in Buckinghamshire
- We have undertaken an analysis of the products we offer, who our customers are, how we can grow our customer base, who our competitors are in each market, how we market and sell our services and what the opportunities are for growth
- Maintaining a good customer experience is a key area of focus for our business unit. Our Customer Services Centre is the first point of contact for many of our residents and retaining a satisfied business to business customer base is critical to the delivery of our commercial ambitions

# How will we deliver our BU Priorities?

In order to deliver our ambitious change programme our Commercial Plan has identified some clear solutions which we need to progress over the lifetime of the plan. We need to:

- Deliver against our financial challenge by:
  - Ensuring we have a clear, accurate and deliverable pipeline of projects to deliver against our savings targets
  - Ensuring we have a medium to long-term strategy to tackle the longer term savings challenges and help build a contingency into the current programme
  - Ensuring our income targets have been appropriately allocated across product areas at the start of each financial year
  - Continuously manage our budgets and in-year pressures to ensure we balance our books by year end
- Increase our income and grow our customer base by:
  - Utilising our tools and systems to ensure key internal colleagues have the latest information about their customers.
  - Continuing to review the costing and pricing of our products
  - Continuing to monitor our competitors in the market
  - Delivering in line with our growth strategy to increase our market presence and customer base
- Manage and maintain our existing customer base by:
  - Reviewing our account management function, including revising our customer segmentation model
  - Continuously monitoring and improving our communications strategy to refine how and when we engage with customers
- Shared services are one of the cornerstones of our strategy: they provide the resilience and stability for growth and innovation. A strong and capable base for service delivery, enhanced by a detailed understanding of our costs and sharp market insight, characterises our approach to facing the challenges ahead. We will look to increase our sharing of services both with Harrow other new partners.

# Financial Overview

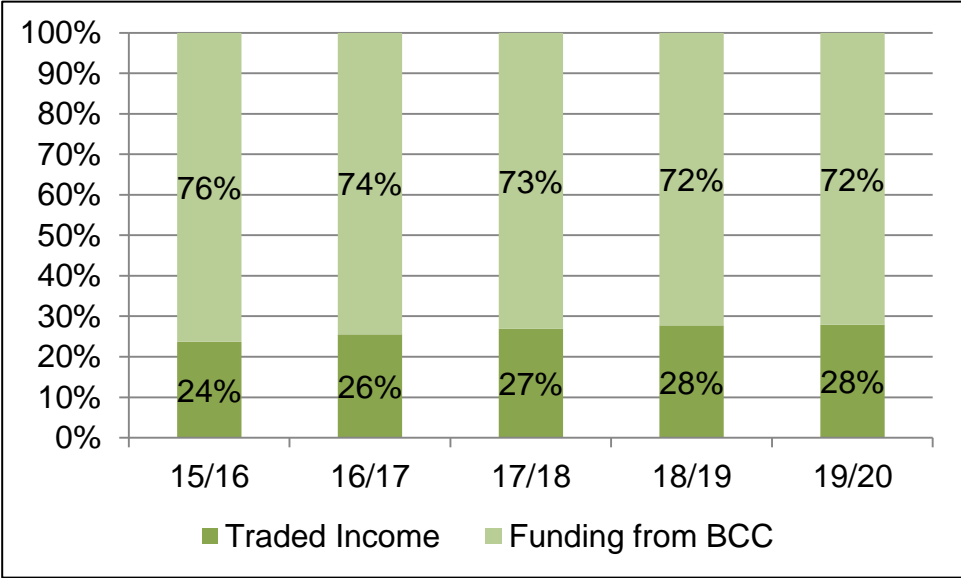
|  | 17/18  | 18/19  | 19/20  | 20/21  |
|--|--------|--------|--------|--------|
| <b>Creating Opportunities and Building Self Reliance</b> | 650    | 536    | 520    | 509    |
| <b>Keeping Buckinghamshire Thriving and Attractive</b>   | 4,105  | 4,024  | 3,915  | 3,848  |
| <b>Safeguarding Our Vulnerable</b>                       | 13,802 | 13,575 | 13,601 | 13,678 |
| <b>Total - Business Services Plus</b>                    | 18,557 | 18,135 | 18,035 | 18,035 |

Table 1: Medium Term Planning Budget by Outcome

Table 2: Funding from BCC vs. Traded Income

|                         | 15/16      | 16/17      | 17/18      | 18/19      | 19/20      |
|-------------------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|
| <b>Funding from BCC</b> | 16,700,580 | 15,598,580 | 14,715,580 | 14,116,580 | 14,016,580 |
| <b>Traded Income</b>    | 5,185,420  | 5,356,420  | 5,428,420  | 5,428,420  | 5,428,420  |

Graph 1: External Sources of Funding and Traded as a % of Operating Budget



For more information, please see the [budget pages](#) on our website.

# Our Financial/Commercial Approach

- We need to reduce our operating budget by £2m over the next 3 three years. Cumulatively this equates to £4.6m over three years
- We have plans in place to deliver this target – Over the next 4 year MTP planning cycle we are anticipating we will deliver £2.25m of savings (108% of our savings target)
- Half way through the 2016/17 financial year we have delivered over half of our planned savings (60%)
- We are on track to over deliver against both our Future Shape Digital and Future Shape Strategic Options Appraisal (SOA) targets

BSP have a portfolio of projects in progress which are helping us deliver the budget reductions. These include:

- HR Shared Service with Harrow Council – This involves the creation of a predominantly HR shared service, managed by Bucks CC with London Borough of Harrow that will allow us to make additional efficiencies in resources and contracts and generate additional income
- Legal Shared Service with Harrow Council – This involves the sharing of our legal service with Harrow and Barnet. The service will be hosted by Harrow Barnet Public Law
- Digital Channel shift – Admissions and Maintain My Street – This involves the deployment of digital technologies, allowing customers to self-serve and significantly reducing demand on the Customer Services Centre
- E-invoicing – Continuing the roll out of an efficient digital end to end purchase to pay system, giving a seamless service to business units and improving our vendor relationships.
- Digitising our post room by reducing the amount of post sent and received by the Council
- Improving our reception and front of house services - Making use of digital and new technologies to improve the customer experience in New County Offices reception

We also have a growth strategy in place to increase our income opportunities. This strategy includes, but is not limited to:

- Reviewing and improving the products and services we are offering
- Identifying and utilising our gateway products to gain credibility and attract new customers
- Continuously reviewing our product charging and costing
- Identify and target potential areas of market growth
- Support the County Council's transformation agenda

# Joint Working

Our landmark shared services partnership with Harrow Council – the first of its kind between a County Council and a London Borough – has provided a strong basis for exploring further partnerships. The first phase of the service went live this year, with Business Services Plus taking over management responsibility for the HR teams at Harrow. Phase two, which will go live in April 2017, will see BSP take on the running of services to schools too. We also have plans to strengthen our partnership with Harrow in coming years – sharing additional services and also sharing with other authorities and public sector partners.

We operate a ‘best of breed’ model of service delivery within BSP; this means we self deliver services which we’re best at, but where it makes sense to do so, we outsource some services to third party suppliers. Our property maintenance services, ICT Public Sector Network (PSN) and Temporary/Agency recruitment services are our biggest contracts delivered by third party suppliers. We are proud of our relationships with our partners and we will continue to work with them to deliver first class services in a mutually commercially beneficial way.

As a Support Services business unit, we also recognise the importance of responding positively and proactively to the changing needs of Buckinghamshire County Council frontline services. We have worked very closely with Children's Social Care & Learning making significant improvements to systems and procedures in response to the OFSTED review. We will continue to work with all business units to respond proactively to their changing needs.

# Delivering Our Plan

To provide our Business Unit Board with assurance that the business is functioning effectively, the Commercial Team provide BSP Board with monthly updates on Assurance. The report provides an update on Business Continuity Plans, Scheme of Delegation, the Commercial Plan, Audits and Risks & Issues. This information is consolidated into a concise Assurance on a Page document.

BSP has a formalised risk management recording and escalation process and a dedicated Risk Champion within their business unit. Updates to the board level risk register (held on the corporate RM system) are required each month to coincide with Board meetings. Any additional/new risks for escalation are referred to the Risk Champion immediately rather than waiting for BSP Board reporting.

BSP has two processes to ensure progress against savings targets are on track. Tackling the Challenge (TTC) tracks progress against our MTP savings and those projects and programmes identified. Tackling the Gap (TTG) is an environment where new opportunities can be identified and scoped in a ‘test environment.’ Any ideas that can help transform our business are taken forward to business case development.

# Equality Impact Assessment Statement

## **Public Sector Equality Duty:**

The BSP Commercial plan supports the Public Sector Equality Duty by ensuring that transformation and change does not and will not discriminate, harass or victimise any section of the workforce or customer base.

The change tracker demonstrates the projects that will be undertaken to ensure BSP reaches its savings targets. Individual EIAs will be completed for these projects when deemed necessary BSP leadership and the level of impact each project has on people and the service.

## **Equality Act (2010) Compliance:**

To comply with our duties as an employer under the Equality Act 2010 and reduce the risk of employees breaching the Duty by, for example, discriminating against service users, customers or each other, the BSP management team will undertake a number of steps. It will ensure employees undertake a number of e-learning modules during induction periods including Health & Safety, Data Protection and Equalities training. It will also ensure manager and employees within BSP are aware of the corporate complaint procedures, disciplinary rules and practices and how to access them. We know that having a diverse workforce is good evidence that our recruitment and selection processes are being fairly implemented as well as being key to business success. We will monitor our staff population to ensure that we are recruiting and developing our employees and, if we are not attracting diverse candidates, we'll examine the reasons why.

The equality impact assessment process will be integrated into change projects, business development reviews and business cases. We will ensure all stakeholders groups including customers and workforce will be consulted throughout to ensure services remain and/or become more inclusive.