

Letchworth Town Council Transition Plan

1. Introduction.

This paper sets out the strategy proposed for the Council to deliver its mandate, reports on work done to date, explains how the Council will operate in accordance with that strategy when it is implemented, and describes the remaining steps to be taken in order for the Council to move from its current position to a new way of working which involves the Council doing no more than meet its legal obligations. The agreement of Council is sought to the proposals and recommendations herein as the basis for moving forward.

2. Delivering the Mandate – Proposed Strategy.

The mandate upon which the majority group on the Council (hereinafter “HELP”) was elected was set out in its leaflet as follows:

“To close down all Council activities as soon as legally and morally possible in a sensible, caring and tidy manner leading to a non-spending Council.”

This was reflected in the resolution adopted by Council at its meeting on 17 June 2009 (Resolution 09/68) that its sole aim for 2009/10 will be

"To close down all Council activities as soon as legally and morally possible, so that its dissolution can then be sought"

It is clear from this that the HELP strategy is, and always has been, a two stage approach.

Stage 1. Close down all activities, and then
Stage 2. Seek dissolution.

It is worth addressing, at this stage, a common misconception about this strategy. The term “non-spending Council” has been used on a variety of occasions. It is well recognised that closing down all Council activities does not of itself mean that there will be zero expenditure from when that happens until the moment of dissolution. The challenge will be to identify the lowest cost approach to delivering compliantly the legal requirements that will remain pending dissolution.

This paper is described as a “Transition Plan” as it deals with Stage 1, covering in particular what that means, and how it is proposed the Council should operate pending dissolution.

3. Dissolution and Community Governance Reviews.

This paper does not deal with dissolution. It is considered that it would be premature to attempt dissolution right now by seeking a Community Governance Review (CGR), for the reasons set out below.

Our understanding¹ is that, in the course of a CGR, when considering whether dissolution is appropriate, the approach will be, in essence, to assess whether the local electorate (i) has had an opportunity to see and assess what an “active” Council looks like, i.e. what it delivers for the community and whether that is considered to be value for money, (ii) has had an opportunity to see what it looks like without an “active” Council, and (iii) remains of the view, after a period of “inactivity” that it does not wish for the Council to continue.

The local electorate had four years of an active Council and it then voted in ways that gave the HELP group a resounding majority across all wards in the town. However, it is recognised (i) that, although until 2005 the town functioned without a parish Council, the electorate has not yet had an opportunity to review what an “inactive” Council feels like in light of the recent four year experience with an “active one” and (ii) that whilst the HELP electoral majority was very substantial, there are still individuals in the town who currently believe that the Council should continue.

Our view, and belief, is that once we have ceased all Council activities, so that it is, in effect, meeting legal obligations (as described in more detail below) but no more, the majority of the electorate will, when it has had a suitable period to assess the matter, demonstrate their unchanged support for dissolution. At that stage, a CGR could be sought. Our approach, however, in recommending the course of action set out herein, does nothing irrevocable to jeopardise the electorate making their choice at the next election.

We consider that, in relation to the objective of achieving dissolution, to seek to apply for a CGR now would be misguided and a waste of public funds. We believe that a CGR commenced right now would conclude that the electorate has not had an opportunity to see what an inactive Council feels like and that recommending de-parishing and dissolution would therefore be premature.

At the last Council Meeting a question was raised about a CGR from the perspective of staff. It put the proposition, in effect, that if there was a CGR this would give the staff the potential for redeployment in other local authorities. Since that meeting the matter has been further investigated and advice taken. The advice received, in short, is that in the event of the abolition of the Town Council and de-parishing of the area as a result of a CGR all contracts, including contracts of employment, would be taken over by North Hertfordshire District Council (NHDC).

In the light of this, the options of (i) doing nothing, (ii) seeking a CGR immediately and making no changes to staffing levels pending the outcome of the CGR and (iii) not at this stage seeking a CGR but reviewing staffing levels and if found appropriate, make redundancies have been assessed. In making that assessment, regard has been had both to the interests of the staff and the obligation for careful stewardship of Council finances. Council has a number of stakeholders and needs to balance their differing interests as best it can.

Option (iii) is **recommended** for the following reasons.

¹ Which is based, inter alia, on discussions with representatives of the North Hertfordshire District Council, the body that would undertake the relevant CGR

- Whilst a CGR could provide a chance of saving redundancy costs and giving the staff the possibility of avoiding redundancy, it requires (a) a CGR to take place – which can take up to a year and (b) the CGR to recommend de-parishing and dissolution of the Council, which is considered to be unlikely at this time on the grounds that insufficient time will have elapsed.
- The likelihood is that if a CGR was asked for now, up to 12 month’s worth of staffing costs would be incurred, and it would still be unlikely to avoid the redundancy costs.
- Given the low volumes of activity in the new way of working and given the time required for a CGR, the potential cost of keeping the staff until a CGR concludes cannot be justified if the new way of working is in operation.

That strongly suggests that Council should now review staffing levels and, if redundancy situations are found to arise, make appropriate redundancy payments to the staff².

4. Closing down all activities of the Council.

In the following paragraphs we overview what we consider closing down activities in this phase means. It goes, perhaps without saying, that the key goal here is to reduce spending and thereby enable Council to set a much lower precept next year and for future years – at, or as close as is achievable to, zero whilst meeting legal requirements.

Closing down activities means, in relation to the following areas:

Services

- Not offering new grants
- “Running out” grant aid to organisations where commitments have been made, typically by making payment for a further year
- Ceasing organisation of subsidised outings/visits save those already in the pipeline
- Not resuming Council funding for the ‘Dial-a Ride’ service
- Ceasing Council funding for Police Support Officer at the earliest appropriate date
- Ceasing membership of local, regional or national organisations where there is a choice on the matter

Assets & Premises

- Terminating the lease of the premises in Leys Avenue as the need for such large premises ceases
- Identifying unnecessary assets and their value, and establishing the most profitable / cost effective way of disposing of such assets³.
- Finding alternative secure accommodation with responsible ownership for documents/assets that require retention and storing / archiving accordingly⁴.

² We consider that even if there was a realistic prospect of a CGR recommending dissolution and de-parishing, given anticipated workloads and time scales, it would still be financially more justifiable to review staffing levels now.

³ Having regard to the risk that in a future election, the electorate may want to return to an active Council, we do not recommend disposal/sale at this stage of assets such as the mayoral chain which may have little resale value but higher “local” value.

- To the extent that it may be necessary, ensuring that appropriate insurance arrangements are in place.

Publicity & Communication

- Establishing the most cost effective way of communicating with the electorate.

Staffing

- Developing a staffing structure which meets statutory requirements at the most cost efficient level, and making long term⁵ cost savings through such (if any) redundancies as are determined by the Policy and Resources Committee to be appropriate.

Finance (including business continuity management)

- Maintaining (including, if required, amending) financial management arrangements, regulations and internal controls that enable sound management of Council finances (including provision for internal and external audit) in a compliant manner at the most cost efficient level and so as to ensure that Fidelity Guarantee Insurance can continue⁶.
- Maintaining delivery of business continuity such that whilst the Council may be carrying out no other activities, it is able to be prepared for, and cope with extraneous requirements that may arise, such as Parish Polls, by-elections, CGRs, requests for information received from the public, including former employees, (and including Data Protection and Freedom of Information Act requests) and similar – the full details of which will be assessed and ensured before the transition phase is completed.

5. How the Council will operate when all activities have been ceased.

We foresee the Council undertaking only the minimum required to meet legal commitments and fulfil statutory duties. The legal requirements of a Council are few, but the areas they cover are, in summary:

- Appointment of required officers,
- Dealing with formalities such as declarations of interest,
- Having in place proper processes (financial, general running and risk),
- Holding of specified meetings,
- Compliance with financial requirements including financial reports, setting of precept and audit.

Annex 1 sets out in more detail the precise statutory requirements and the structure and day to day arrangements that we foresee applying. The Council will operate under the required processes (finance and otherwise, including for example business continuity as described above and risk management), with the required roles filled in an appropriate

⁴ Including for documents containing personal data, retention schedules in accordance with data protection legislation.

⁵ Long term, for these purposes, being regarded as the anticipated 4 year life cycle of this Council.

⁶ This insurance, in essence, protects “loss of the precept”. As the precept decreases, so would the required amount of this insurance.

manner. It will undertake these tasks so as to enable us to meet legal requirements but no more.

With regard to the roles required by statute, there are two which need to be filled; the Proper Officer, and the Responsible Financial Officer (“RFO”).

Whilst decisions in regard to staffing are within the remit of the Policy and Resources Committee, Council is invited to note that our current assessment is that we consider it highly unlikely that the levels of activity that would be required of either the individual fulfilling the role of the Proper Officer or the RFO would require full time posts. Indeed, our belief is that the levels of activity in respect of both will be such that they could be undertaken as a voluntary service by an appropriate unpaid Councillor⁷. Clearly, the implications and consequences of this assessment are matters for consideration by the Policy and Resources Committee.

The Council will also keep under consideration the appropriate time to seek a CGR and, when it considers that time has arrived, move on to seek the dissolution of the Council.

It is **recommended** that Council agree that this is the model way of working that it wishes to adopt.

6. Transition – the process.

Annex 2 sets out in more detail the steps taken to date. In short, much of the work has already been undertaken to cease activities. So far, we have

- Set up a General Purposes Committee to agree an action plan to move towards the agreed aims, and to oversee progress in its implementation. (Minute 09/68)
- Set up working parties under the General Purposes Committee to address the issues identified in Section 4 above. These working parties have now reported⁸ to the GPC and their recommendations have been implemented
- Set up a Policy and Resources Committee to review staffing issues. This includes looking at staffing requirements in the light of the new aims of the Council and how it will be run once the current transition is complete. Its delegated powers are to take all decisions concerning the Councils staffing and establishment (Minute 09/68)

There are, however, areas of the transition that are not complete and on which some significant decisions remain to be taken. They relate to the close down of the office, finalisation of the review of staffing requirements required to meet legal obligations and the proposed new ways of working and, if there is a change of Proper Officer or RFO, the “handover interface” so that there is, in effect, continuity of proper control and operation of systems that require to continue to be implemented.

There is a degree of interdependency of these and we anticipate that it may be necessary to “go round the loop” again as decisions are made, and including holding further

⁷ We understand that legal advice has been received from an external solicitor with relevant experience in local government law stating that this would be lawful.

⁸ Save for the Dissolving the Council working party which has not reported as we are still in Stage 1.

Council Meetings. However, we consider that a period of two months would be sufficient to achieve the relevant activities⁹. It is therefore **recommended** that the target date for implementation of the new way of working should be no later than 31 December 2009.

In relation to closure of the office premises, that is a matter within the remit of the General Purposes Committee, with consideration to reports from the Assets, Accommodation and Services working party.

In relation to decision making as to staffing requirements, that is a matter within the remit of the Policy and Resources Committee which has been receiving representations. However, it is **recommended** that Council advises Policy and Resources Committee that in the light of the proposed way of working, its preference would be to have the minimum number of staff consistent with fulfilment of its statutory obligations and request the Policy and Resources Committee, with that objective in mind, to consider and determine whether and if so, the extent to which, redundancy situations arise.

In the period leading up to implementation of the new way of working, it will be necessary to ensure that the new ways of working do meet the statutory requirements in Annex 1 and to ensure that any “handover interface” operates smoothly.

“Handover interface” has regard to the fact that there must be continuity of operation of systems such as financial control, and designation of officers. There must be no “break” in the operation of such controls, and if responsibility for any particular control is “handed over” the outgoing owner must in effect be able to agree “good receipt” with the new owner so that there is no later “comeback”.

Annex 3 sets out in more detail the process proposed for the transition. In short, it is **recommended** that a Transition Team should be set up with responsibilities as set out in Annex 3 and which would report to Council accordingly.

7. Potential appeals.

It is foreseeable that if the recommendations in this paper are adopted by Council, it may lead to decisions being taken that would of themselves give members of the staff rights of appeal. We therefore consider it appropriate that Council should consider at this stage what steps may be necessary to ensure that those rights of appeal can be properly, and fairly, exercised.

In general terms, it appears that any appeal would in effect be an appeal of a committee decision which would need to be made to the Council. In practice this means that there is a need for a panel of Councillors who are not involved in the taking of the original decision(s) and who could therefore fulfil appropriately the functions required of an appeal body of the Council and then report to full Council after hearing any such appeal.

It follows that it would be prudent to review the constitution of the General Purposes Committee (of which all Councillors are currently members) and reduce its membership so that there is a body of Councillors who are not members of either the General Purposes

⁹ Although technically, the premises do not need to be vacated until March 2010.

Committee or the Policy and Resources Committee. Those Councillors could then fulfil the appellate function of the Council in relation to decisions that they had not been a party to.

It is therefore **recommended** that Council reduces the membership of the General Purposes Committee to provide a body of Councillors who are on neither GPC nor PRC so as to ensure that it is possible, should it prove necessary to do so, to constitute an impartial panel of Councillors to hear any appeals that may be made against decisions or recommendations made.

8. Risk Assessment

A risk assessment in relation to the implementation of the recommendations in this Transition Plan has been undertaken and is attached at Annex 4. It is **recommended** that Council review and consider the attached risk assessment.

9. Conclusions

Council is invited to note this report and

- (i) Agree the recommendation that Council does not at this stage seek a CGR.
- (ii) Agree that the proposed way of working for the Council after the transition as set out in this paper and its annexes has been implemented is the one that Council wishes to adopt.
- (iii) Agree that 31st December 2009 be the target latest date by which the new arrangements should come into effect.
- (iv) Agree (if (ii) above is agreed) to advise Policy and Resources Committee that in the light of the proposed way of working, its preference would be to have the minimum number of staff consistent with fulfilment of its statutory obligations and request the Policy and Resources Committee, with that objective in mind, to consider and determine whether and if so, the extent to which, redundancy situations arise..
- (v) Agree that a Transition Team be appointed to manage the transition and that it should have the responsibilities and authorities (including budget authority) as set out in Section 6 above and Annex 3, and that the Transition Team and the Policy and Resource Committee and the General Purposes Committee be required to take such steps as are necessary to implement the transition to the new way of working, taking such steps as are necessary to ensure that this way of working will enable Council to meet its legal obligations.
- (vi) Agree to reduce the membership of the General Purposes Committee to provide a body of Councillors who are on neither General Purposes Committee nor Policy and Resources Committee so as to ensure that it is possible, should it prove necessary to do so, to constitute an impartial panel of Councillors to hear any appeals that may be made against decisions or recommendations made
- (vii) Review and consider the risk assessment attached.

Authors:

Councillor George D. Ritchie
Councillor Bruce Carr

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Annex 1

Operating as a Council which meets only statutory requirements

1. Our obligations

The minimum requirements of a Council are, in essence, that it must have/do the following:

(i) In relation to its general existence and running.

- Appoint a chairman
- Appoint a proper officer
- Have standing orders and a code of conduct
- Ensure that Councillors sign formal declarations of office and sign agreements to abide by the Councils code of conduct, register financial or other interests and declare these appropriately
- Hold a minimum of 4 meetings a year and the Annual Town Meeting, (including publicising them, issuing agendas and minutes).
- Have in place a risk management scheme
- Comply with employment law (where there are employees), equal opportunities and disability legislation, the Freedom of Information and Data Protection Acts.

(ii) In relation to the Council's finances and financial controls

- Appoint a responsible financial officer (RFO)
- Appoint an independent and competent internal auditor
- Have financial regulations giving details of how the Council manages its finances
- Have a system of internal control where someone other than the RFO keeps an eye on financial management arrangements and checks financial documents selected at random.
- Undertake the required internal and external audits.
- Prepare and sign the annual return and publicise for general inspection
- Set a budget and precept.

It is also prudent to ensure that adequate insurance is in place to cover relevant risks (including for example Fidelity Guarantee Insurance).

All of these currently exist. Many, if not all, will continue unchanged BUT, given that the level of activity generally will (and in most cases already is) very much lower than it was hitherto, the processes will operate on a much smaller scale.

2. General existence and running under the new regime

Items such as the appointment of a chairman, taking declarations of interest etc have been done and need only be revisited as and when changes take place (e.g. appointing a chairman is typically an annual event taking only minutes. Taking further declarations of office will only occur if and when new Councillors are appointed).

We propose that the Council will continue to have two Committees (General Purposes and Risk Assessment Panel – the latter of which will ensure that the risk management scheme requirements are met), and a Finance Sub Committee. If no staff are employed, there will be no need for a Policy and Resources Committee.

Providing clerical support will be far less onerous than it was previously as we foresee far fewer meetings, and that those that there are will be of short duration only. There will obviously need to be the minimum of 4 Council meetings a year and the Town Meeting. We foresee only a very few meetings of the GPC. The meetings of the Finance sub-committee will be those necessary to ensure it undertakes its supervisory role and can fulfil its other responsibilities, e.g. budget/precept, audit etc.

Meeting rooms will need to be booked once the Council's offices have been released and this is likely to entail a hiring charge. These limited costs will be far lower than would be incurred if the current premises were retained.

Standing orders and the code of conduct can continue as they are at present, although we will undertake a review of them to ensure that there are no minor consequential "tweaks" that need to be made to them.

3. The Councils finances and financial controls under the new regime

We recognise that there must be a RFO and Council must ensure that there is one at all times.

Auditors have already been appointed and we see no reason to change the current arrangements.

We will ensure that financial regulations are in place. We see no reason for these to be materially different from those which currently exist and are applied, but we foresee that the volume of transactions will be very substantially reduced.

The Finance Sub Committee will retain its supervisory role and will meet from time to time as required. It will have the prime responsibility, working with the RFO to prepare the budget and to recommend the precept for consideration at the December Council Meeting. It will also receive and review the external Audit report along with the Risk Assessment Panel.

The Council's current insurance policy includes Fidelity Guarantee Insurance. This provides cover against the "loss" of the precept. It should be continued, but as the precept reduces, so the extent of this (and hence the premium) will reduce correspondingly.

4. Staffing under the new regime

Overall, for the reasons set out above it is considered that the level of support required for the Council in relation to meetings and other "general existence" activities will be of a level that could be undertaken by a willing unpaid volunteer Councillor – as with other Councils which have no or little activity – which volunteer can fulfil the unpaid role of the proper officer.

Similarly, and again for the reasons as set out above, it is considered that the level of financial activity under the new regime will be significantly reduced and hence that there will not be a need for a full time paid post.

These assessments obviously raise matters for consideration by the Policy and Resources Committee – they are intended to be information of assistance to the PRC, but not to usurp their decision making powers, and in this regard we consider that these recommendations do not fetter that committee’s discretion.

Annex 2

Progress to date

- 1 The aims of the Council were approved at the meeting of the Full Council on 17th June 2009 (Minute 09/68) and on the same date the Council set up a General Purposes Committee to oversee progress towards these aims. (Minute 09/68)
- 2 The General Purposes Committee at its meeting on the 23rd June 2009 set up the following Working Parties to examine aspects of the work of the Council, and to recommend to the General Purposes Committee actions needed to advance the aims of the Council (Minute GPN09/07)
 - 2.1 Assets, Accommodation and Services.
 - 2.2 Grants, Voluntary Organisations and Events
 - 2.3 Dial a Ride and Community Policing
 - 2.4 Publicity, Communications and the Web Site
 - 2.5 Standing Orders and Policies
 - 2.6 Dissolving the Council
- 3 These Working Parties considered their areas of responsibility, and made recommendations to the General Purposes Committee. In making these recommendations, each Working Party undertook risk assessment, and these were included in the relevant reports to the General Purposes Committee. At the request of the Risk Assessment Panel, these are now being reviewed and reformatted in a standard form.
- 4 The following were the reports from the Working Parties. In each case, the recommendation was agreed by the General Purposes Committee.
 - 4.1 Assets, Accommodation and Services.

Minute GPN09/14. The recommendation was to give notice to terminate the lease of the premises in Leys Avenue, with a further report to be provided to the following meeting.

Minute GPN09/28. A written report was presented giving details of the situation regarding the Council's Assets and Service Contracts. This report was accepted as a statement of the issues that will need to be resolved in due course.
 - 4.2 Grants, Voluntary Organisations and Events.

Minute GPN09/14. The Working Party recommended that expenditure be limited to that which was already committed, namely:

 - 4.2.1 Norton Archaeology Group
 - 4.2.2 Coach Trip to Clacton
 - 4.2.3 Football Tournament
 - 4.2.4 Anglia in Bloom

In addition, it was agreed to prepare information for Voluntary Organisations on alternative sources of funding, that a page be added to the Web Site to provide this information, and that the Council provide assistance to Voluntary Organisations in securing alternative funding.

- 4.3 Dial a Ride and Community Policing.
Minute GPN09/21.
- 4.3.1 In the light of information provided by Hertfordshire County Council on the usage of the second bus being provided by the Town Council contribution, the recommendation was to provide no further financial support to the Dial a Ride service, but to seek to put in place alternative facilities for Multiple Sclerosis patients to reach the treatment facility, and to provide information on assistance in transport being provided by voluntary organisations.
- 4.3.2 In the light of information provided by Hertfordshire Police, and the stated intention of the Letchworth Garden City Heritage Foundation to enhance Town Centre security, it was recommended that no further financial contribution be made to the Police Authority after the expiry of the current agreement on 31st March 2010.
- 4.4 Communications and Web Site Working Party.
Minute GPN09/28
- 4.4.1 A written report on Communication Strategy was presented listing options, and giving the advantages and disadvantages of each, incorporating the relevant Risk Assessment.
- 4.4.2 A written report on the Web Site was presented listing recommendations, and including a Risk Assessment.
- 4.5 Standing Orders and Policies.
Minute GPN09/35 and 09/78. Proposed changes to the Council's Standing Orders were recommended to the Council by the General Purposes Committee. These were subsequently adopted by the Full Council on 15th September 2009.
- 4.6 Dissolving the Council
No report has been received from this working party on the basis that the view is currently held that it would be premature to commence implementing this part of the Council's mandate until the first part has been completed and a suitable time elapsed.

Annex 3

Transition

It is **recommended** that the transition process should work as follows.

1. Council appoints a Transition Team (of up to 5 Councillors) to take responsibility for oversight of the transition process.
2. The Transition Team should draw up, in consultation with staff, a more detailed list of activities to be undertaken to enable a handover interface and the timelines for doing those activities.
3. The Transition Team takes responsibility for reviewing existing practices and recommending how in practice the required processes would operate in future. It shall have the authority to liaise with Councillors and staff to discuss the issues identified. This would include, in particular articulation of how financial processes would work (the financial regulations and oversight and audit requirements) as well as delivery of the other items listed in Annex 1.
4. The Transition Team be authorised to seek such external advice in relation to the transition and proposed new way of working matters (legal or otherwise) as it considers necessary at a cost not exceeding £5,000.
5. The Transition Team takes responsibility for ensuring that a revised business plan for the Council after transition is written up and put before Council for adoption prior to the date of implementation. The way of working described in Annex 1 should form the kernel of that revised business plan.
6. At an appropriate stage when sufficient information is available, the Transition Team should notify the auditors and the Council's insurers of the proposals.
7. GPC, PRC and the Transition Team shall bring back to the Council reports on their activities (at such meeting or meetings as are considered necessary) so as to enable the Council to ratify recommendations made to it, and then confirm that it is satisfied that the Council is ready to move to the new way of working.
8. All activities and proposals shall be risk managed in accordance with the Council's risk assessment processes.

Annex 4

Risk Assessment					
Activity: Transition to new organisation			Assessment Date:		Review Date:
Hazard	Risks Arising from hazards	Who is at risk	Existing Controls	Further action required to reduce risk to an acceptable level	Target date, by whom
The structure proposed for the Council does not meet statutory requirements or enable the fulfilment of statutory obligations	<p>Failure to meet these requirements could result in Councillors being suspended from office</p> <p>Financial – proper control of finances may be jeopardised by the operation of systems that do not meet statutory requirements.</p>	Councillors	<p>The proposed structure is based on Councils which currently operate with no paid officials.</p> <p>We have good quality relevant legal advice that the structure proposed will meet statutory requirements and enable the fulfilment of statutory obligations.</p> <p>Current financial systems provide adequate controls in relation to finance. The underlying systems can be continued, even if there is lesser use of them as a result of lesser financial movements.</p>	<p>Continue to take legal advice and consider representations.</p> <p>Assuming that a Transition Team is appointed, it shall take steps to ensure that further development of plans continues to assess compliance and it shall provide a report to Council confirming this prior to “go live”.</p>	
Failure to identify activities that need to be undertaken as part of the transition process	Implementation of a new structure which leaves required activities “unowned”	Councillors / Officers	<p>Working parties have identified and are identifying what needs to be done. The Transition Plan will be considered by Council.</p> <p>Recommendation that a Transition Team be appointed to oversee the process</p>	Assuming that a Transition Team is appointed, it shall take steps to ensure that further development of plans continues to assess compliance and it shall provide a report to Council confirming this prior to “go live”.	
Assets (including the current premises) are	Financial		The current assessment is that premises the size of the Leys Avenue offices will not be required beyond next March. In the event that there is a	Keep under review.	

disposed of and then found to be required at a later date			<p>need for any premises, it appears that suitable small offices could be obtained on a short term basis at a lower cost.</p> <p>Termination of other agreements to be conditional on resolution of staffing issues that confirm that the premises are not required.</p> <p>Assets that might “one day” be required (e.g. the Mayor’s chain) be placed in an appropriate place for safekeeping.</p>		
Issues arise in relation to activities of the Council prior to transition that lead to a need to look at old papers or records (including litigation claims, employment related queries, Freedom of Information Act requests etc)	Financial/	Councillors/ officers	Proper records are currently kept.	<p>Ensure that papers and records are handed over and retained in a suitable manner and that they can be accessed to meet legal obligations and in a way that ensures risks of claims against the Council can be minimised. Advice to be sought on this by the Transition Team and appropriate recommendations brought forward.</p> <p>Set up and implement proper archiving to allow retention at appropriate intervals (including to ensure data protection legislation compliance)</p>	
Other risks associated with the cessation of particular activities			These have been the subject of separate risk assessments by individual working parties.		
Assessor’s signature:			Clerk’s signature:		
Date:			Date:		

