

PUBLICA

Delivering great services locally

BUSINESS PLAN 2018 - 19 Preparing for the Future

DRAFT: 7 March 2018

APPENDIX A
AGENDA ITEM (a)

FOREWORD



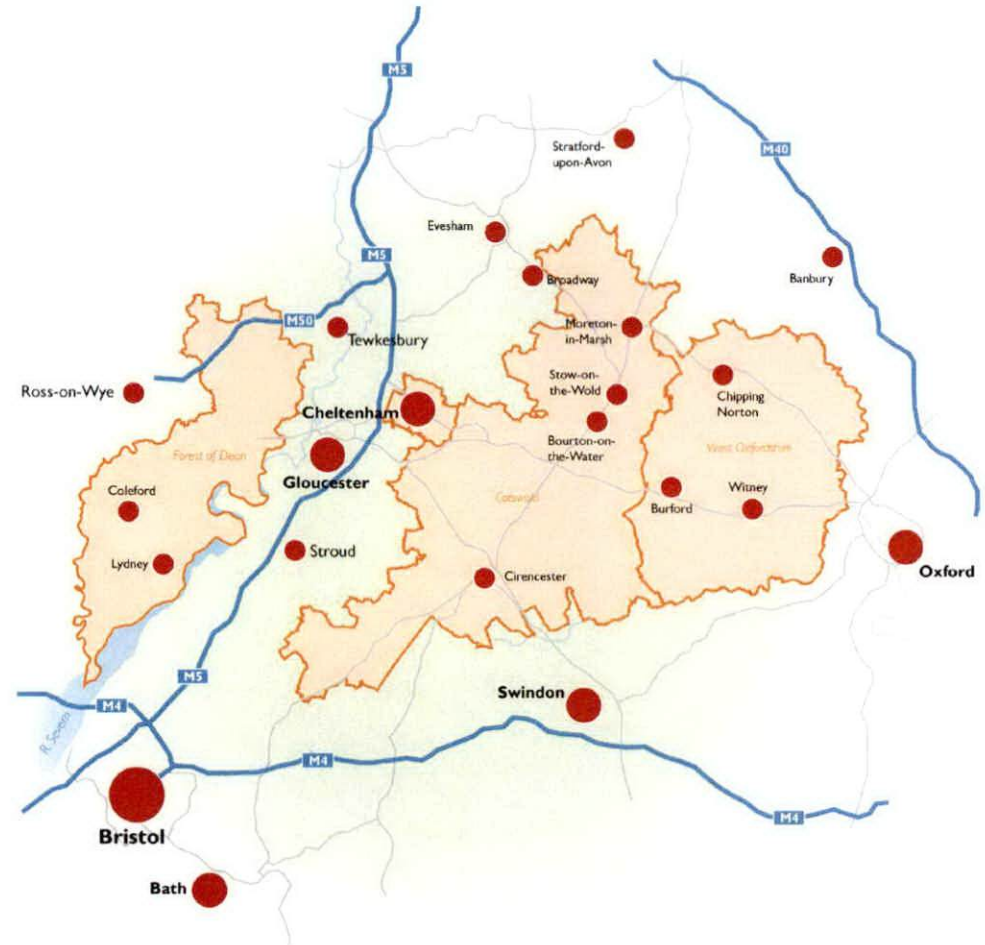
It is a great pleasure and privilege to present Publica's first Business Plan in which we set out our vision for the future, our aims, objectives and company values. We also set out our ambitious plans for the coming financial year of what we will do to start delivering on the outcomes required by our member Councils.

The four member councils of Cheltenham, Cotswold, Forest of Dean and West Oxfordshire have been working together in partnership delivering better local services through shared services since 2012. In 2017 Publica was established to provide the opportunity to take this relationship into a new era - to take advantage of even more shared services and to provide a more independent and commercial approach to service delivery whilst protecting and maintaining the independence and sovereignty of each of our member councils.

If 2017/18 was about delivering a smooth transfer to Publica then 2018/19 will be focused around preparing for the future by delivering improvements for our residents, our staff and our councils.

Dave Brooks
Chairman
Publica Group Limited

David Neudegg
Managing Director
Publica Group Limited



WHAT IS PUBLICA?

Publica is a company created by four councils to deliver great services locally and which aims to:

- **Be a great service provider**
- **Be a great place to work**
- **Support our member councils deliver their ambitions**
- **Be a growing and improving company**

Publica is a council owned employment company which delivers shared services between Cotswold, West Oxfordshire, and Forest of Dean District Councils and Cheltenham Borough Council. Publica additionally provides services to the Cheltenham Trust, Cheltenham Borough Homes and UBICO (an environmental services local authority company).

Each of the councils retain their independence and identity but by working together and sharing resources seek to maximise mutual benefit, leading to more efficient, effective delivery of local services.

Publica was created to assist the Councils to:

- Respond to current and future financial pressures
- Deliver efficient, value for money services
- Increase organisational resilience and capacity by sharing expertise
- Deliver better outcomes for our communities
- Champion local needs

Together we aim to seek out and deliver the best solutions for our residents and communities using all of the potential options available to us; to design our directly provided services to succeed in meeting the agreed standards; and to ensure they are delivered for the best possible value. We also want to be a great organisation that people want to work for.

The company approach provides a mechanism to bring employees from across the public sector under a single employment model. The company is independent of individual councils but accountable equally to all partners.

This provides us an opportunity to create an even more motivated workforce through the provision of modern, flexible employment arrangements free from the constraints associated with national arrangements.

This allows us to act in a more commercial and creative way to deliver a better approach to public service delivery focused on delivering benefits for local residents.

WHAT DOES PUBLICA DO?

For three of the member councils Publica effectively provides the organisational management of those councils. This includes direct management of a number of district council services provided to residents such as Planning and Economic Growth; Housing, Benefits and Council Tax; Environmental Health and Licensing; Waste and Recycling and Leisure and Community Services.

Publica also provides the councils with support and advice in terms of developing their policies and strategies and writing reports for formal decision making processes. Publica staff collate and present all the necessary data and information needed for the councils to meet their democratic, legal and statutory requirements.

Publica additionally provides back office services (Finance, Human Resources, and ICT) to Ubico (another council owned company providing waste and environmental services), Cheltenham Borough Council, Cheltenham Borough Homes and the Cheltenham Trust.

THE LOCAL AUTHORITY CONTEXT TO COLLABORATIVE WORKING

Shared Chief Executives, shared management and shared services have been around since about 2005 and have delivered excellent efficiency savings for those councils which have adopted them. However, the continuing budget pressures and grant reductions have created the need to do more and go further, which has in turn led to new digital transformation initiatives, commercialisation approaches and alternative delivery models.

Although local authorities are all taking their own approach to meeting the financial challenge there are some emerging themes that are gaining traction within the sector. A number of local authorities are creating Council Owned Companies mostly concentrated around single service areas, and for individual councils. In this context Publica is unique both in the range of services it provides and the number of partners that it involves.

A GREAT
PLACE TO
WORK

“Publica is a company created
by four councils to deliver
great services locally”

MEMBERS' STATED REQUIREMENTS

The Member Councils have set out both the financial and non-financial expectations of Publica which are set out below:

Outcomes

- Savings**
 - Delivers realistic and sustainable revenue savings.
 - Provides a positive return on investment in the medium to long term.
 - Enables us to make further savings through partnership and better asset management.
 - Enables opportunities for income generation.
- Influence**
 - Respects our separate identities as individual authorities.
 - Ensures our decision making will remain locally accountable.
 - Strengthens our ability to exercise community leadership on behalf of our localities.
 - Allows us to retain strong local knowledge of our frontline services.
 - Each authority has impartial commissioning and client side advice from people they trust.
 - Enhances and maintains good quality services to the public.
 - Allows us to nurture our partnerships and take advantage of new ones.
- Quality**
 - Creates organisations that are flexible and adaptable to future changes.
 - Has governance and structures that are streamlined and easy to understand.
 - Is widely acknowledged to be socially responsible.
- Creativity**
 - Empowers employees to be creative, collaborative and enquiring.
 - Supports our commitment to a public service that responds to and empowers our local communities.
 - Fosters and rewards and innovative, can-do approach to delivering services.

Financial requirements

The business case that supported the formation of Publica identified savings of £2.35m to be delivered over the first three full years of the contract followed by further iterative savings amounting to £0.5m. This amounts to around 10% of the core contract values.

The ambition of the company is to deliver these as soon as possible and help the Councils exceed the targets of the business case.

The principal way the savings will be delivered are by:

- **Traditional shared services** - sharing teams of staff working across multiple locations
- **Service redesign** - reviewing service processes and cutting waste and bureaucracy
- **Digital service provision** - modernising service provision to digitally enable services
- **Employment cost savings** – offering new and current employees more flexible remuneration.
- **Release of office space** delivering rental income to Councils

Publica - "A great place to work"



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THE PUBLICA WAY - VALUES

At Publica we put our customers first. We provide excellent service to our local communities, the councils and clients we support and our colleagues. Our aim is to have a reputation for service that is second to none, and we do that by staying true to our shared values. This is the way we work and how we make our customers smile.

AUTHENTIC

- We act genuinely and transparently. We do the right thing for our customers, our organisation and each other.
- We don't just go through the motions. We take time to engage with, listen to and really understand our customers' needs.
- We're honest and decent. We admit it when we make a mistake, we put it right and we learn from it.
- We respect and support our colleagues. We look out for each other and are always ready to step in and help.

MODERN

- We are not set in our ways. We are constantly looking to find ways to innovate and do things smarter.
- We are curious and ask questions. We create an environment where feedback and challenge is welcome.
- We innovate, embrace new technology and find ways to improve and work better.
- We work collaboratively, actively sharing our learning and experiences with each other and recognise each other's success and achievements.

FLEXIBLE

- We are agile - adapting how and what we do to meet the demands of our customers, our colleagues, our local communities and the needs of the modern world.
- We are practical; use our common sense, insight and judgement. We are willing to adapt and make changes as the need arises.
- We go out of our way to deliver for our colleagues and for our customers, even if that means changing our plans.
- We are always willing to learn new methods, tools and techniques to improve the service we deliver and meet the future needs of our customers.

THOUGHTFUL

- We take pride in delivering a great service, taking the time to understand and care about our customers and their needs.
- We work to high standards, aiming to add value at every opportunity and deliver our best.
- We are warm and approachable, acting professionally but still being friendly and kind.
- We respect our colleagues and customers.

A photograph of a call center agent, a young man with glasses and a headset, smiling broadly while working at a computer. He is wearing a grey sweater over a collared shirt. In the background, another agent is visible, also wearing a headset and working at a computer. The scene is brightly lit, suggesting a modern office environment.

“We provide excellent service to our local communities, the councils and clients we support and our colleagues”

BUSINESS PLAN VISION

By 2020... for our residents, councillors, staff, clients and other councils to notice a visible improvements to how services are delivered

By 2022... for Publica to be providing services to other councils

By 2025... for Publica to start providing services to other public organisations

2018/19 BUSINESS PLAN OBJECTIVES:

Publica recognises that no improvements can be made unless our councils and residents have confidence that the things that matter to them are done well.

Our first priority will always be:

To do the 'day job' really well

Doing the 'day job' does not mean that we shouldn't strive to improve the way services are delivered to make it easier to contact us and less effort on the part of residents to get things done. We know that many of residents' contact with councils are around things that need to be done and we want to make this a painless as possible for residents. We want to make sure that people are clear about what we can and what we can't do, to make sure that we meet customer needs.

Our second priority is to:

Transform service delivery and exceed service expectations

We know that the only way to deliver great services locally is to employ people who want to live the Publica values and use their skills for the benefits of our member councils, our clients and our customers.

Our third priority is to:

Develop Publica people

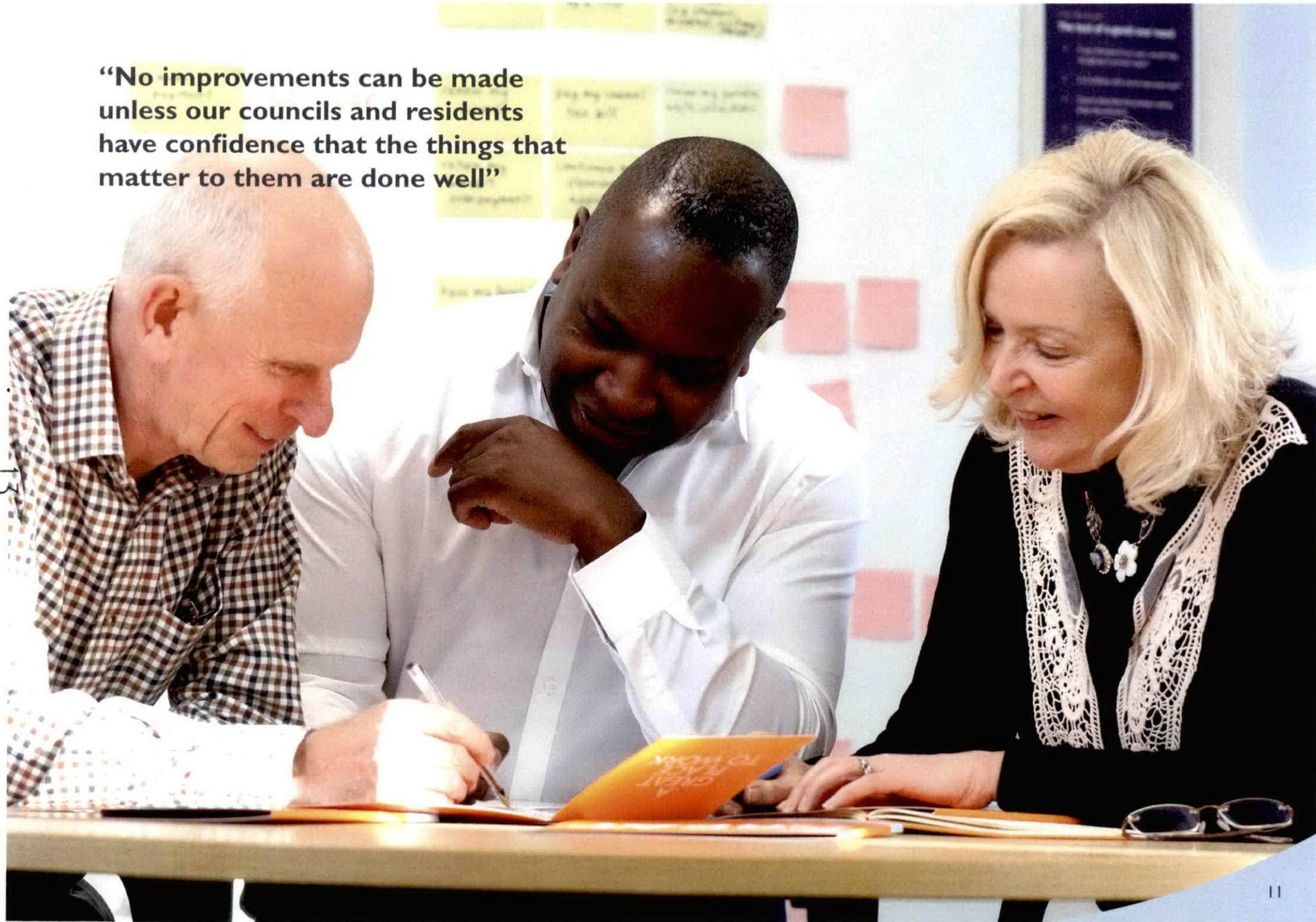
We understand that we have been established by our member councils to deliver even greater efficiencies which in turn protect critical local services to communities. However, we do not just want to do the bare minimum but rather have ambitious long terms plans to transform the way public services are delivered in a connected world.

Our fourth objective is to:

Exceed the minimum business case financial targets

“No improvements can be made unless our councils and residents have confidence that the things that matter to them are done well”

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GREAT SERVICES

Publica wants to transform the way local services are delivered. To help do this a cross section of staff made up of people with lots of different skills and from very different service backgrounds, has started working together to develop the way we design our services so that Publica is a customer focused organisation driven by real user needs.

Over the business plan period customers and users can expect:

- Services delivered to a high standard that are responsive, flexible and focused on individual and community needs
- Staff who are warm and approachable, who take the time to listen and understand their needs
- A seamless approach to handling complex service requests that cut across more than one service
- Openness and honesty about what we can and cannot provide/deliver
- A willingness to hear and consider ideas about how we can improve our services

The order in which service design reviews will take place hasn't been decided yet. What we do know though is every service will benefit from some improvements by April 2019 and staff and users of the services will be involved.

We're doing this in a way that will build on the great work happening already and help us to:

- show we're **AUTHENTIC** and **THOUGHTFUL** by taking the time to engage with, listen to and really understand our customers' needs
- be **FLEXIBLE** adapting how and what we do to meet the rapidly changing demands of our users - customers, colleagues and local communities and the needs of the modern world
- understand the end to end customer journey, who's involved and the things that make it work
- develop meaningful performance measures so we know how well we're meeting user needs and to help us do things even better
- be an agile, **MODERN** company and encourage a creative and enterprising culture where our staff own and drive this change
- develop a new organisational design, based on a network of empowered people and not a structural hierarchy
- use real time and relevant data to make our decisions - not use long held untested beliefs
- understand baseline demand, resources and costs so we can track changes and benefits over time - social, economic, environmental or reputational
- make sure our users (and partner councils) are not disrupted by our service and organisational transformation

We'll know if Great Services is being successful by measuring:

- Ease and effort for customers
- Cost effectiveness - the minimum business case financial targets are exceeded
- Efficiency - reduced costs and/or reduced demand of dealing with customer enquiries

Great Services is just one part of our transformation programme, so our work will help to:

- develop new thinking and encourage our staff to be ready to experiment
- reinforce and support the Publica Way of **AUTHENTIC – FLEXIBLE – MODERN – THOUGHTFUL**
- have visible and accessible leaders across Publica
- develop Publica so it can work effectively in a digital age
- build greater resilience across the partner councils
- enable future growth of Publica Group with minimal change

KEY ACTIONS & RESOURCES

1. To establish core digital capabilities required to transform all services.
2. To establish an ongoing and prioritised rolling programme of service transformation reviews.

GREAT PEOPLE

The creation of Publica brings together employees servicing four councils and three major client organisations. The key challenge within the Business Plan period is to create one organisation with consistency and fairness for all staff. In creating something new there is a unique opportunity to design a new organisational model that works for all. We will continue to engage with our people in developing our new arrangements.

Over the business plan period our people can expect:

- Excellent opportunities for personal, professional and career development
- Recognition and reward for the contributions they make
- Support, trust and respect
- Flexibility and choice
- To have jobs that are challenging, rewarding but manageable
- To have a safe and healthy working environment
- To be well informed not only about the organisation they work for but also about the people and communities they serve

We're doing this in a way that will build on the great work happening already and provide a commitment to our employees based upon the following reward principles, regardless of whether that is basic pay, recognition or benefits:

- **Aligned** to our organisation - closely aligned to the Publica business strategy and goals, reflective of 'The Publica Way', and our communities.
- **Trusted** - people trust our approach to reward that they feel is fair and consistently applied.
- **Based on contribution** - we recognise and celebrate contribution and those that go above and beyond.
- **Modern and simple** - we ensure that it's relevant to the wants and needs of employees today, including choice and flexibility to meet the needs of a diverse workforce with different requirements.
- **Attractive** - we need to be competitive and aware of how we compare with the wider market.
- **Transparent** - we want to be open, transparent and clear about how we reward so that employees understand the deal – what is expected and what they can expect in return.

How will we know when we have been successful in having great people?

- By regularly monitoring how motivated and appreciated employees feel
- How they rate ease and effort of getting their tasks completed
- By comparing ourselves to others in measuring overall employee engagement, satisfaction and health and wellbeing
- Seeing a reduction in short term sickness absence and employee conflicts
- Measuring increased employee productivity

KEY TASKS

1. Embed and build on 'Total Reward' approach
2. Introduce a flexible benefits scheme for April 2018
3. Introduce Publica People Recognition scheme linked to the Publica Way by April 2018
4. Complete establishment of formal employee consultation and negotiation arrangements by April 2018
5. Consult with employees and Unions on a new organisational design framework with a view to implementation by March 2019
6. Consult and agree new pay and grading arrangements and revisions to Terms and Conditions by March 2019

“In creating something new there is a unique opportunity to design a new organisational model that works for all”



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SUPPORTING COUNCILS & CLIENTS

The service delivery model created by Publica is unique in that it not only brings together service providers but also delivers expert advice and commissioning support. This ensures that together we maximise the benefits of our scarce resources and ensure that policy development, procurement and service delivery are all aligned.

Over the business plan period our councils and clients can expect:

- Consistent high quality services
- Continuously improving services
- From 2019 onwards potential new income streams for the benefit of Company Members
- On-going financial benefits for Company Members
- Provision of better data and insight to improve decision and policy making
- Top quality expert advice and support

We're doing this in a way that will build on the successful partnership working that has happened previously. We want councillors and clients to visibly notice a difference over the next 18 months with better ways of accessing staff, quicker responses to queries and more positive feedback from users of our services

How will we know when we have been successful in supporting our councils and clients?

- By regularly monitoring how satisfied Councillors and Clients are in the support they receive
- By measuring how Councillors evaluate the support they are given in undertaking their various roles
- By providing robust data and performance metrics to track improvement
- By exceeding the financial and non- financial outcomes

KEY TASKS

1. Develop a detailed process for the commissioning of individual services, based on the Commissioning Framework, in preparation for a rolling review of how all services are provided from April 2019 onwards
2. Establish robust support services for councillors, including PA support, access to officers, training and development, and opportunities to share examples of best practice, based on detailed user needs research
3. Undertake a detailed review of council strategies/plans and corporate priorities in preparation for councils following District Elections in 2019/2020
4. Review the new format Service Delivery Plans and Performance Information in Q3 for any changes to be made for implementation in April 2019
5. Agree communication and liaison plans with each council and client
6. Review liaison arrangements between Publica and councils and make recommendations for improvement by December 2018.

IMPROVING & GROWING COMPANY

In a fast changing world Publica needs to be a learning and improving organisation. We don't want to just see small incremental improvements built upon traditional service delivery principles but rather seek out and try new approaches which set us apart from other public sector providers. Already set out elsewhere in our Business Plan we outline our proposals for radical change and collectively these form our transformation programme.

If we achieve our Business Plan Objectives of being noticeably better, we believe that Publica can offer a compelling and attractive proposition to others. Our marketing approach is to be a better and always improving organisation. We will do this by reinvesting some of the additional savings generated from the over-delivery of our financial targets.

What our existing and new councils and clients can expect from us:

- Confidence and evidence that Publica is great for service provision and a great employer
- Make significant savings and deliver better services with affordable investment costs
- Benefit from a culture of continuous learning that keeps on delivering improved services

New business opportunities will be created by focusing on delivering great services locally and making sure that potential new member councils and clients are aware of what we are doing. We would like to be in a position in 2019 to start negotiations in attracting new business. This means that we need to start proactively telling our story in 2018.

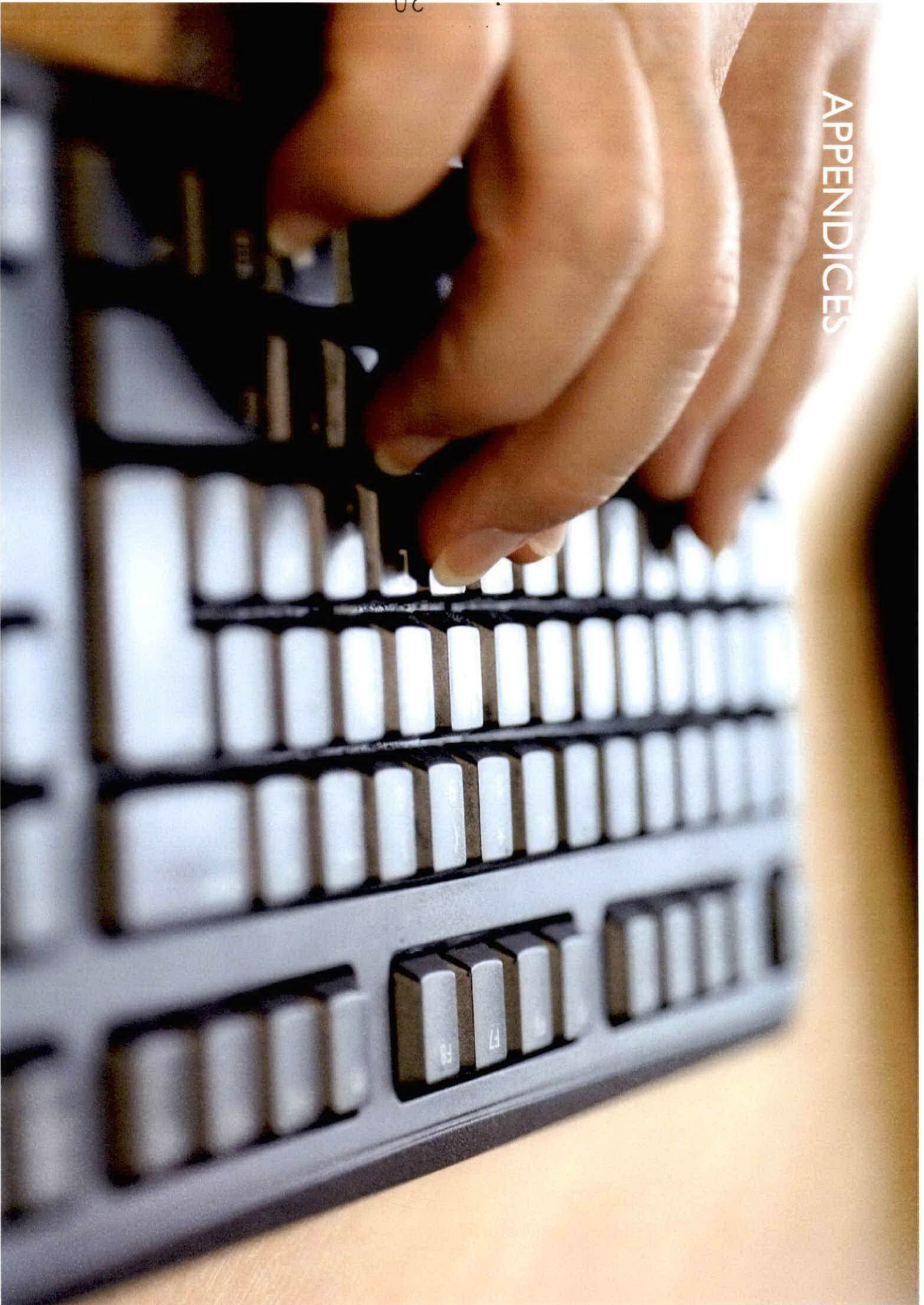
With regard to attracting new council members our focus will be in raising awareness and understanding of our approach directly with senior councillors and their officers.

We will know when we are successful when:

- We get interest from other public bodies in what we are doing
- We convert interest into commitment; and
- We successfully transition our first major new client/member to Publica

KEY TASKS

1. Develop a Transformation Programme Plan by April 2018
2. Establish a Transformation Lead and Core Team by April 2018
3. Establish key specialists to support the programme by April 2018
4. Develop a Communication Plan by April 2018



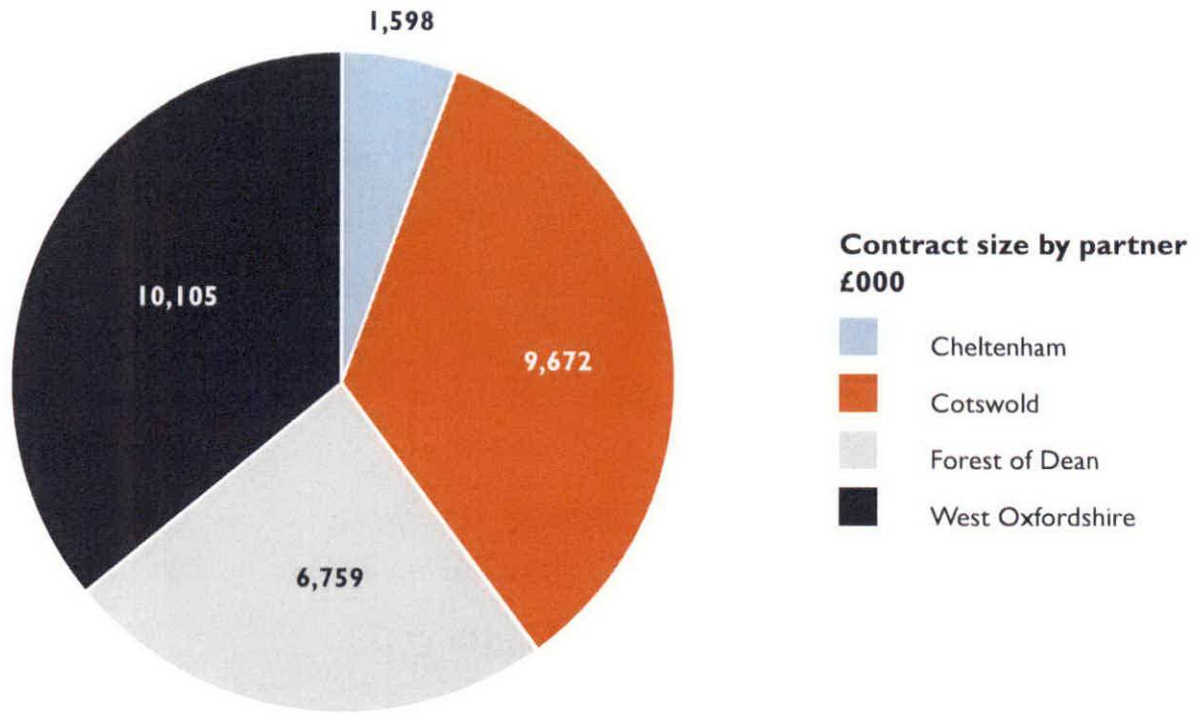
APPENDIX I: SAVINGS TARGETS FROM ORIGINAL BUSINESS CASE

	2015-18 £000	2018-19 £000	2019-20 £000	2020-21 £000	Total 2018-21 £000	2021-28 £000	Total 2015-2028 £000
Clear delivery plan		481	121	71	673	500	1,173
Being planned		0	760	279	1,039		1,039
Total contract savings required		481	881	350	1,712	500	2,212
Council / Partnership	2,721	173	358	106	637		3,358
Total	2,721	654	1,239	456	2,349	500	5,570

APPENDIX 2: DRAFT TRANSFORMATION BUDGET

	2017-18 £000	2018-19 £000	2019-20 £000	2020-21 £000	Total £000
Transformation team	190	400	400	150	1,140
External transformation support	250	706	250	100	1,306
Digital architecture & infrastructure	90	500	500	100	1,190
Costs of change	350	750	150		1,250
Transformation budget	880	2,356	1,300	350	4,886

APPENDIX 3: PRELIMINARY CONTRACT VALUES BY PARTNER COUNCIL 2018/19



APPENDIX 4: COMPANY GOVERNANCE AND BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Publica is a 'teckal' company jointly owned by four Councils Limited by Guarantee. The company Articles of Association set out those areas of reserved matters which can only be decided on a 75% agreement of shareholders (each council owning one share). Each Member Council has agreed that the Leader of the Council acts on behalf of their council in casting its vote for reserved matters decisions.

Decisions in relation to service policy setting, strategy development, and service standards are retained by the Council and will remain subject to existing arrangements for decision making and scrutiny within each council. The establishment of Publica does not impact upon this. Any changes and improvements to services will take place through each council's existing annual corporate planning and budget process which again is subject to existing scrutiny arrangements.

The Company Board consists of four Executive Directors, four (jointly appointed by the shareholders) Non-Executive Directors, and one Non-Executive Director appointed by Cheltenham. The shareholders have also appointed the Executive Directors and agreed the appointment of the Chairman from the independent Non-Executive Directors.



David Neudegg
Managing Director

David joined West Oxfordshire as their Chief Executive in 2007 having previously held senior roles in Salisbury and Poole. In 2008, he became shared Chief Executive with Cotswold District Council leading the extensive shared services agenda for the two councils. In 2015 he was appointed Managing Director of the 2020 Partnership to lead the programme of shared services for the four councils and has been the Managing Director for Publica since the company formation in 2017.



Sue Pangbourne
Executive Director

Sue joined Forest of Dean District Council in 2008 as Strategic Director and has been the Council's Head of Paid Service since 2009. She has previously worked for three other local authorities at Unitary, County and District level, in environmental and corporate policy roles, before becoming a senior manager. Before her local government career, she was the first employee of Friends of the Earth Cymru (Wales), supporting local authorities and other organisations with their environmental projects and recycling schemes. Sue is Publica's Director for Service Delivery.



Frank Wilson
Executive Director

Frank has worked in local government finance for 32 years, with 11 years as Chief Financial Officer at West Oxfordshire District Council, the last eight of which have been shared with Cotswold District Council. He has led the Councils' approach to efficiency across a number of workstreams including commercialisation. For the last two years he has been Head of Paid Service for Cotswold and West Oxfordshire District Councils and will lead on finance, resources and transformation for Publica.



Christine Gore
Executive Director

Christine joined the partnership as Strategic Director for both West Oxfordshire and Cotswold in June 2015. Before then she was Director of Business Services at Aberdeenshire Council. Previously she was the Director of Planning and Environmental Services, and also Corporate Services at Aberdeenshire Council. She has also worked for several local authorities including South Oxfordshire, Waveney, Manchester and Liverpool City. Christine has operated at a Director level for over 14 years (10 of which with a Planning focus). She is a qualified Planner and has extensive further post-graduate qualifications in management and business studies. Christine is Publica's Director for commissioning and council support.



**David Brooks, Chairman
Non Executive Director**

David has worked in the food industry for nearly 30 years

including nine years with Brake Bros and 11 in the baking industry. Between 2002 and 2008 he was Chief Executive of Finsbury Food Group plc. He left this role in 2008 and decided to undertake a Non-Executive portfolio of work, which also included a four year spell as the Chief Executive of Sussex County Cricket Club, cricket being one of his passions. He said the role of NED for Publica Group looked interesting and it resonated with him as his first job was at Kent County Council as a trainee accountant.



**Steve Anderson Dixon
Non Executive Director**

Steve has nearly 40 years' experience in the media, with

28 years for Northcliffe Media where he was Divisional Managing Director responsible for print and digital titles across the South West & Wales including The Citizen and Gloucestershire Echo, and five years at Trinity Mirror where he was Chief Operating Officer and responsible for all the regional newspapers and websites. He now has a portfolio of Non-Executive roles including the British Veterinary Association. In addition Steve runs a property investment business with his wife.



**James Towner
Non Executive Director**

James works for Capita as a Strategic Engagement Director.

He has spent more than 20 years working in customer service transformation for organisations including Thames Water and HSBC. He was Chief Operating Officer for the Research Council's shared service centre, when the seven UK Research Councils created a new approach to sharing services.



**Rosa Stewart
Non Executive Director**

Rosa has 8 years' experience in energy in public and private

sectors. She is a qualified solicitor by professional background and has advised energy and infrastructure project developers at the leading global firm Clifford Chance. Rosa has also led a power sector reform programme in Nigeria. Currently she is deputy director leading on the Government's international climate change strategy. She is interested in helping develop new projects and initiatives, particularly to do with the environment and energy.



**Wendy Flynn
Non Executive Director**

Wendy has been a councillor on Cheltenham Borough Council for

15 years, including a year as Mayor.

