
Report to Council

Date of Meeting: 25 June 2026

Subject: Transformation Through Collaboration - Update

Report by: Chief Executive

1.0 Purpose

- 1.1. The purpose of this report is to provide Council with an update on the progress achieved in delivering the Transformation through Collaboration (TtC) programme, following approval in November 2025 to commence joint working with Falkirk Council and other partners.

2.0 Recommendations

It is recommended that Council:

- 2.1. Notes the progress and emerging outcome from the collaboration work with Falkirk Council and Stirling Council.
- 2.2. Agrees that a further update on progress, outcomes and next steps is presented to Council in Quarter 3 2026/27.

3.0 Background

- 3.1. The report ([here](#)) presented to Members in November 2025, set out the need for further transformation work to be undertaken by the Council.
- 3.2. As has been outlined previously, whilst the Council's Be the Future Transformation programme is ambitious in itself it is not sufficient to meet the financial, service delivery and service sustainability challenges facing the Council in future years. The Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy sets out these challenges in more detail and can be found [here](#).
- 3.3. Nationally, the Scottish Government is also encouraging transformation beyond the boundaries of any single organisation as highlighted in their June 2025 [Scotland's Public Service Reform Strategy: Delivering for Scotland - gov.scot](#)
- 3.4. Whilst the Scottish Government's reform Strategy considers change opportunities within public bodies, local government is a partner in this work, rather than the strategy directly impacting on the local government sector.

The Strategy is, however, helpful in setting the context for change, recognising that “we must be willing to be brave, to challenge ourselves to ensure we are delivering what the people of Scotland need and deserve”. There is also a recognition that risks need to be taken in this context if we are to deliver the best we can.

- 3.5. Solace is also leading a programme of reform supported by the Improvement Service. Significant work is underway to deliver the ambitions set out in their report published in October 2022: [Delivering a future for Scottish local authorities](#).
- 3.6. The report sets out the significant challenges facing local government but also recognises the opportunities to transition to models of service delivery focused on current successful partnerships across Councils. The report recognises the need for this to build on the delivery of good outcomes needed and expected by communities. A number of workstreams are now in place to deliver the ambitions set out in the report. Officers are connected to this work to ensure the Council can benefit from this wherever possible.

Local Perspective

- 3.7. To progress the need for collaboration with partners locally, discovery work, in partnership with PWC was undertaken by Clackmannanshire and Falkirk Councils during Spring/Summer 2025. Council considered a report in November 2025 ([here](#)) which set out the work and the findings. Council also agreed that work should commence in the delivery of what was described as Tranche 1 work, which included the following 14 services being assessed for integrated models of service delivery with partners:
 - Asset Strategy – with Forth Valley Public Sector partners
 - Corporate Procurement
 - Economic Development
 - Employability
 - HR & Payroll Services (to be considered on a Once for Scotland basis)
 - Internal Audit & Fraud
 - Social Care Front Door Provision – including contact centre and access arrangements, case management, financial assessments, service user charges & income policies (and automation), opportunities for Children’s services joint commissioning, shared business processes for Children’s Adults & Justice services.
 - Potential for Joint Foster Care Work
 - Procurement and contracting of IT for Education
 - Regulatory Services: Trading Standards, Building Standards, Environmental Health
 - Resilience & Emergency Planning
 - Revenue & Benefits Services
 - Storage & maintenance of JLES and education equipment
 - Support for ASN Services
- 3.8. For all services, further work was to be undertaken to consider the options for integration, with business cases being developed. These businesses cases would then be presented to Members for consideration.

3.9. In addition, 3 further services were identified as areas which would benefit from further 'deep dive' work given the complexity of these services. This work would further explore the budgets, workforce, processes and technology, prior to consideration of the development of business cases:

- Housing
- Roads
- Estates Management

3.10. In February 2026, Stirling Council joined this work as a full and equal partner. This has enabled all work originally considered to be applicable to Clackmannanshire and Falkirk only, to be expanded to the three Forth Valley partner Councils. In addition, it has provided an immediate partner to enable commencement at the appropriate stage of those projects requiring more than two partners.

4.0 Considerations

4.1. Significant work has been undertaken since receiving approvals from the three partner Councils and the following provides a summary of work to date and the next steps.

Oversight Board

4.2. An officer Board was established to provide oversight of progress and to ensure delivery at pace with terms of reference agreed in December 2025 and the Board commenced meetings, on a 4-weekly basis, in January 2026. The Board is chaired on a rotational basis by the Chief Executives of the three partner Councils.

4.3. The Board considers the priority order for projects to commence and approves scoping documents which are developed by lead officers. The Board also receives updates on the progress of projects and any barriers or risks which require to be addressed. In addition, the Board approves any use of the £2m Invest to Save funding provided by the Scottish Government to support this work (see paragraphs 4.26 – 4.30).

4.4. A Programme Management officer (PMO) has been appointed to support this work. This appointment has been made on a secondment basis from the Improvement Service. This ensures that the learning from this work can be shared nationally. Any learning from national work can also be brought back to this Transformation through Collaboration (TtC) work.

4.5. The PMO officer is working with all project leads to ensure good standards of project management are instilled in all TtC work.

Project Updates

4.6. Eight of the overall 17 projects have now commenced, , with activity progressing at different stages reflecting the complexity and scale of each service area

- 4.7. Project scoping documents have now been agreed for Revenue & Benefits, Internal Audit & Fraud, Emergency Planning & Resilience and Corporate Procurement. Development and design work is now being undertaken to inform and produce business cases for all projects, with some nearing completion.
- 4.8. Housing and Procurement & Contracting for IT in Education have also commenced, and scoping documents are being prepared by the lead officers.
- 4.9. Transitional work is being undertaken for Roads and Estates Management/Land Services by Clackmannanshire Council and Stirling Council. This work is focused on addressing immediate operational pressures and stabilising service delivery, while also generating insight to inform future integrated service options across all partners, including Falkirk.
- 4.10. Progress has continued in advancing the programme, with a strong emphasis on effective engagement and the successful onboarding of Stirling Council. While this has required a more considered approach across three councils, it has established a stronger collaborative foundation and increased the potential for sustainable benefits. All projects are expected to be commenced and progressing during 2026.
- 4.11. Collectively, this work is establishing the foundations for more sustainable, resilient and efficient service delivery across the three Councils. Early benefits will include improved alignment of service design, shared learning and increased opportunities for economies of scale. Further financial, service sustainability and service delivery improvements will be quantified through the development of business cases and reported to Council in due course

Overarching Projects

- 4.12. Work has also commenced on a number of corporate projects which will inform the full programme of work. Governance and Legal was first to commence. This work will set out the structural options for integrated service delivery and the legal considerations including employment law, procurement and governance. Ensuring a good foundation in all of these areas is fundamental to the success and expansiveness of this work. A procurement exercise has commenced to appoint a law firm to support this work.
- 4.13. Finance work is also required to consider the cost/benefit analysis of projects, to inform the development, design and implementation phases of this programme. This work will also consider the cost sharing options for integrated services.
- 4.14. In addition, business analyst support is needed as is support for the HR implications of this work; both of which are now being scoped out. A programme of organisational development activities will also be required to support the culture and behaviour changes needed, for such an expansive programme of collaboration.
- 4.15. External support is being procured to help with all of these overarching strands.

Benefit Realisation

- 4.16. As projects are being developed, lead officers will consider the current 'as is' service delivery arrangements in each Council followed by options for integrated services going forward, looking at what can be achieved and the 'to be' model. To do this, officers will assess people, processes, systems and financial details of the service area. In addition, consideration will also be given to a model for integrated service delivery, based on the legal work being undertaken to establish a framework for this.
- 4.17. This work will enable business cases to be developed outlining the proposed way forward. These will set out the changes being recommended, and the reasons for these recommendations. To do this, clear benefit realisation must be set out, including financial benefits, service sustainability benefits and service delivery improvements. Only if these are sufficient, will a move to integrated service delivery be recommended. Business cases will be considered by the Board, updated as required then submitted to Council for approval. Approval would be required from all partners for the business case to progress to implementation. If approved, significant work is still required to implement any integrated model of service delivery before the actual benefits will be realised.
- 4.18. Over the full programme, it is expected that there would be sufficient financial and other benefit realisation in return from the investment of the Invest to Save funding.

Joint Staff Forum

- 4.19. Throughout this work, employee and Trade Union engagement is essential. To support this, a Joint Staff Forum has been established. This is chaired on a rotational basis by the three partner Council Chief Executives. It includes representation from Trade Unions across the three Councils, as well as appropriate officer representatives.
- 4.20. The terms of reference for the Forum was developed with Trade Union colleagues in January and February. These were formally agreed at the first formal meeting of the Forum in March. The Forum meets on a quarterly basis to ensure Trade Unions are provided with updates on progress.
- 4.21. Whilst the Forum enables cross Council engagement, it does not replace local engagement in each Council which will continue and will provide Trade Unions with other opportunities to raise issues in-between formal meetings.

Communication and Engagement

- 4.22. Alongside the Forum, good timely communication is also required for all employees. Following each Board meeting, a news story is issued to inform employees of actions and decisions being taken by the Board. This is also sent to all elected Members.
- 4.23. A page has been developed on the employee section of the Council's website, which provides access to all news story updates from the Board, as well as a set of Frequently Asked Questions: [Latest News](#) As scoping documents are agreed, these are also made available on this web-page.

4.24. This page is updated and added to as the work progresses. Hosting it on the website enables employees who do not use a laptop or similar device at work, to still access the page to find updates.

4.25. In addition, and as projects commence, lead officers will engage with their teams working in the project area to ensure they are updated on the work and involved in relevant workshops at appropriate stages as the project develops.

Invest to Save Funding

4.26. There are clearly costs associated with the implementation of this work. Members will recall that Clackmannanshire and Falkirk Councils submitted a bid for Invest to Save funding from the Scottish Government during 2025 to support these costs. As previously reported, this was successful and £2m of funding was received.

4.27. To date, the following areas of spend have been committed from this funding:

Collaboration Programme Area	Spend
PMO Support - To fund external PMO support via the Improvement Service. The person undertaking this work also has a link to national work to ensure lessons learned both ways.	£65k
Revenue & Benefits – To enable external support for the project design work required for revenue & benefit services	£50k
Governance Work - To provide legal advice and develop a framework for models of integration, setting out the employment and procurement advice for each option. In addition, to provide legal advice to inform a framework for democratic processes.	£250k
Finance Work – External support to map the cost/benefit analysis for projects and the cost sharing arrangements for integrated services	£80k
Additional anticipated spend – HR Support and OD Support	c£120k
Current total committed spend from £2m funding	£565k

4.28. All requests from lead officers for access to this funding are made via a bid template which ensures the funding is being used for appropriate purposes in line with the funding criteria.

4.29. It is anticipated that further bids for use of this funding will be received from most other project workstreams.

- 4.30. The original bid for £2m was made when there were two partner Councils. With the onboarding of Stirling Council additional work is required to assess current arrangements and data in all three Councils. There will also require to be further time spend in the development and design phase to take account of this. In this context, and to ensure sufficient funding to deliver integrated services, officers have submitted a further bid to the 2026 Invest to Save fund, for an additional £1.5m. At the time of writing, feedback on this bid is awaited and a verbal update will be provided at Council.

Next Steps

- 4.31. The Board will continue to receive updates from those projects which have now commenced, with a view to some business cases being agreed for consideration by Council later this year. In addition, during the remainder of 2026, it is anticipated that most other projects will commence.
- 4.32. As work is being undertaken to deliver this Tranche 1 of collaboration work, further areas for collaboration are being identified. This may enable new services to be included in a Tranche 2 which would be presented to Council for consideration. Development of a Tranche 2 is however, subject to good progress and pace being maintained and elected Member approval, as appropriate, for collaboration through integrated services for those which are part of Tranche 1.

5.0 Consultation & Engagement

- 5.1. All partners have contributed to the preparation of this report. A similar report is being submitted to each partner Council at the same time to ensure elected Members across the three Councils receive simultaneous updates.
- 5.2. Trade Unions continue to receive updates through the Joint Staff Forum, as well as local engagement in each Council.
- 5.3. Employees continue to receive updates through communications after each Board and engagement from lead officers if they work in one of the service areas which have now commenced.

6.0 Sustainability Implications

- 6.1. There are no direct sustainability implications arising from this report.

7.0 Resource Implications

7.1. Financial Details

- 7.2. At this stage, there are no financial commitments for the Council in progressing with this work. The costs currently associated with the development and design phase of Tranche 1 are being met from the £2m of Invest to Save funding received from the Scottish Government.
- 7.3. A bid for £1.5m has been made to the Scottish Government for additional Invest to Save funding. A verbal update on this will be provided at the meeting of Council.

7.4. The aim is for the cost of delivering services to be reduced, whilst becoming more sustainable through this work. This, however, will only be identified through business cases which are under development and will be reported to Council at a future date.

7.5. The full financial implications of the recommendations are set out in the report. This includes a reference to full life cycle costs where appropriate.

Yes

7.6. Finance have been consulted and have agreed the financial implications as set out in the report.

Yes

7.7. *Staffing*

7.8. As each project commences, lead officers from the service area are identified to undertake this work. It is recognised that this is in addition to their normal duties. Where required, and if approved by the Board, additional support is being provided. This additional support is funded through use of the Invest to Save funding.

8.0 Exempt Reports

8.1. Is this report exempt? Yes (please detail the reasons for exemption below) No

7.0 Declarations

The recommendations contained within this report support or implement our Corporate Priorities and Council Policies.

(1) Our Priorities

Clackmannanshire will be attractive to businesses & people and ensure fair opportunities for all

Our families; children and young people will have the best possible start in life

Women and girls will be confident and aspirational, and achieve their full potential

Our communities will be resilient and empowered so that they can thrive and flourish

(2) Council Policies

Complies with relevant Council Policies

8.0 Impact Assessments

8.1 Have you attached the combined equalities impact assessment to ensure compliance with the public sector equality duty and fairer Scotland duty? (All EFSIAs also require to be published on the Council's website)

Yes

8.2 If an impact assessment has not been undertaken you should explain why:

Any potential impacts will be evaluated in line with the development of implementation plans.

9.0 Legality

9.1 It has been confirmed that in adopting the recommendations contained in this report, the Council is acting within its legal powers. Yes

10.0 Appendices

10.1 Please list any appendices attached to this report. If there are no appendices, please state "none".

None

11.0 Background Papers

11.1 Have you used other documents to compile your report? (All documents must be kept available by the author for public inspection for four years from the date of meeting at which the report is considered)

Yes (please list the documents below) No

Author(s)

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Approved by

NAME	DESIGNATION	SIGNATURE
Nikki Bridle	Chief Executive	

