

# Transformation madness must stop



**The acceleration of the Transformation programme in August from five years to three years created concern but to slash this again in October to 18 months came as a shock.**

The madness increased when the latest papers show that the Transformation team must complete all the staff reductions, programmes and reviews (excluding Asset Management) in the next six months.

The council approved the new executive structure at its meeting on 25 June as part of the council's Transformation programme.

However, the chief executive returned to full council last week saying he intends to review the structure again at the top level. Proposals will be brought forward to the next meeting.

This begs the question that if we cannot review and organise around a small amount of people over a period of five months, how will we manage to review the whole organisation and 20,000 staff in six months?

UNISON believes this accelerated programme is impossible to complete without putting at risk the staff, the public, our services and the council's

reputation.

The Transformation programme needs to slow down and be carried out at a pace that is manageable for the officials, staff and the unions.

Rushing ahead without all the relevant information and proper meaningful consultation will only lead to mistakes and cause the council and our services to crumble.

UNISON demands that our councillors and senior officials have a serious and honest look at our concerns and consider the potential risks if this acceleration is not slowed down!

## Reviews

We all have read about the work streams within Transformation; Business support, Channel shift, Localities, Asset management, management tiers plus Health and Social care integration.

On top of these we now see what city wide reviews actually mean. Almost every section and every service will be under review.

We have been given a

basic list of 28 review titles and have started requesting further information on these.

Some members will have had initial presentations from management and been informed that their review has commenced.

Where this is the case we have appointed lead officers who will be organising to meet with members involved.

However it is likely that the Budget process will produce further reviews on top of this initial list. Again, we must question how this amount of change can be managed in such a short space of time?

There is no denying the magnitude of this whole process and we are trying our very best to answer all queries coming into the branch. We will try to update members on a weekly basis.

## Avoiding compulsory redundancies

Councillors have instructed officials to pursue voluntary arrangements vigorously and report back every

four weeks. UNISON will monitor this closely and ensure all measures are taken to avoid compulsory redundancies.

## VERA shambles

As many of you know, around half of the 1,500 staff who applied for VERA have been refused.

UNISON believes that almost everyone in the council is under threat.

We have now been notified of at least 28 organisational reviews associated with transformation. This is on top of all the current organisational reviews. How can we possibly have 'meaningful' consultation?

Yet instead of keeping VERA applications on hold until each review commences, staff have been refused outright.

According to the council around 2,000 staff must leave. Why then have there been so many refusals? Is this because the staff are needed to provide vital public services? Officials need to explain their reasoning to staff and to the elected members.

Every job lost is a service lost.