

Buckinghamshire local government reorganisation



Challenge

Given our strong track record in local government reorganisation, Ameo was engaged to help Buckinghamshire council's transition to a single unitary while maintaining service continuity for residents.

Delivering the programme through their own internal team, the council recognised a need to augment this with a knowledgeable agency with proven experience in unitary transition. Our team provided rapid insight that further improved the approach and overall governance of the programme.

Our approach

We started with a review of the programme's initial set up and plan revealed areas for improvement. This led to us taking the lead on several crucial projects within the programme that included reviewing the approach to Fees and Charging, rebranding for the new council, the ICT workstream including access control and the internal intranet.

We coached the council's internal team to enhance their approach, sharing our extensive experience in delivering complex projects and supporting other unitary programmes. Our advisory role also included helping the programme director target areas we felt were cause for concern, working together to decide upon the best solution quickly.

To make sure activity was prioritised to meet core deliverables and milestones, we supported the internal team to review their milestones and dependencies to keep the workload manageable.

As a supportive tool, we developed a "real time" programme assessment model to show the impact of the slippage versus the reality of the delivery, broken down to align the governance structure of the programme. We also ran "go-live" readiness assessments to identify any operational challenges which may exist on Day one, creating areas of focus for the team.

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Results

Despite the enormity of the change, the new Council successfully went live, during COVID-19 with no impact on the services residents received.

The new council can now continue on their journey to deliver outstanding services to its residents consistently across the county footprint of Buckinghamshire.

“Ameo’s support was vital key in helping us make sure we delivered this programme successfully while maintaining services for our residents”

– Roger Goodes, Service Director for Policy and Communications

Roger Goodes, Service Director for Policy and Communications, summed up our work, “Our strong relationship with Ameo helped make this project a success. Following their work with Dorset and their LGR programme, Ameo were able to support us to frame and structure our approach to our unitary transition. Their workshops, support and engagement provided critical challenge that strengthened our project.

“The Ameo team provided hands-on insight and, by augmenting our existing teams, they were able to help us build up the skill sets of our programme office team. Many of our team benefitted from the coaching that Ameo provided.”

“The Ameo partners were great at maintaining communication throughout and ensured we understood what was happening. Their recent experience was invaluable to giving us the confidence we needed. They tailored their approach to our circumstances and this flexibility was a great help to working collaboratively.