



Report to:	Strategic Policy and Resources (Transition) Committee
Subject:	Review of Public Administration: Initial Transition Plan
Date:	4 th September 2009
Reporting Officer:	Peter McNaney (ext. 6217)
Contact Officer:	Kevin Heaney, RPA Project Coordinator (ext. 6202)

1.0	<u>Relevant Background Information</u>
1.1	Members are aware that the implementation of the RPA reform programme for local government is firmly on track to deliver 11 new councils in May 2011 with the focus shifting from policy development towards implementation. There is now a greater challenge for Transition Committees and Elected Members to drive the process forward at the local level. This is further reinforced by the fact that Transition Committees will be given a statutory basis in early 2010
2.0	<u>Key Issues</u>
2.1	Following on from the recent RPA workshop held with the Committee on 17 th August and the previous circulation of an RPA roadmap/timetable (copy attached at Appendix 1), a more detailed management implementation plan (version 1) is attached at Appendix 2 for Members information. Projects have been chunked into 'bite' sized tasks and lead officers identified.
2.2	It is intended that this initial plan would form the basis of a Forward Work Plan for the Committee setting out those important RPA related issues which need to be taken forward with the key milestones scheduled.
2.3	Inevitably, the level of RPA related activity will grow in intensity and scope throughout the transition period and its management and delivery must be adequately resourced and co-ordinated. Chief Officers are committed to supporting the Transition Committee in its role in driving forward the RPA transition process and ensuring that appropriate implementation structures are in place.
2.4	Important to recognise that within every change process there is inevitably uncertainty and unforeseen circumstances do arise. Planning is a process of constant review, re-prioritisation, refinement and refocusing of effort and resource in line with shifting demands and needs. Whilst we will clearly plan ahead in terms of what is needed, the transition plan (attached at Appendix 2) should be viewed as a live document which will be continually updated to enable us to manage changes in the external programme of work or to take account of important ad-hoc issues as they arise.
	<u>Monitoring & Review</u>
2.5	Members will note that monthly progress update dashboard reports will be submitted for the consideration of the Committee, with an assessment against targets illustrated through the use of the traffic light performance model (i.e. red, amber, green). This will provide Members with a clear indication of the degree of progress of each key strand of work and flag up any issues/areas of concern (e.g. red light indicating that little or no progress has been made or an issue emerged which needs political direction or pressure).
	<u>Key Milestones</u>
2.6	Some of the short-term indicative milestones in the RPA process are as follows:- September 2009 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ draft communications and engagement plan submitted for the consideration of the Committee at its meeting on 18th September ▪ draft response to the 'Reform of the NI Planning System' submitted for the consideration of the

Committee at its meeting on 18th September

- Belfast public consultation event re: 'Reform of the NI Planning System' scheduled for 11th September
- final Ministerial agreement around the transfer of functions and the reconfiguration of local government boundaries
- consultation on the draft Local Government (Reorganisation) Bill which will significantly dictate the future shape and operation of councils post RPA

October 2009

- staff vacancy control system put which impacts upon the filling of new posts within the existing 26 councils
- draft response to the Local Government (Finance) Bill submitted for the consideration of the Committee at its meeting on 18th September

November 2009

- Development and roll-out of BCC capacity building programme for staff and Elected Members
- draft response to the Local Government (Reorganisation) Bill

January /February 2010

- Statutory Transition Committees
- Members' Severance Scheme agreed
- Staff severance scheme agreed

3.0 Resource Implications

Whilst there are clearly Human Resource and financial implications attached the Council's ongoing involvement and management of the RPA change process, there are no direct implications contained within this report.

4.0 Recommendations

Members are asked to note:

- a) the initial implementation plan (version 1) attached at Appendix 2
- b) that a draft response to the Reform of NI Planning System consultation document will be submitted for the consideration of the Committee at its meeting on 18th September
- c) that a draft communications and engagement plan will be submitted for the consideration of the Committee at its meeting on 18th September

5.0 Decision Tracking

1. Monthly progress update reports submitted to the Committee for consideration - RPA Project Co-ordinator
2. draft communications strategy submitted to the Committee for consideration by September - RPA Project Co-ordinator
3. Convene meeting between representations of the Castlereagh/Lisburn Transition Committee and the Belfast City Council Transition Committee, Chief Executive, by September 2009

6.0 Appendices

Appendix 1: RPA high-level road map/timetable

Appendix 2: Initial draft implementation plan