

ADVISORY

# HEAD OF PROPERTY – INTERIM SUPPORT







## ADVISORY OVERVIEW

Norse Consulting provided a senior director to act as Interim Head of Property, comprising Estates and Asset Management, Facilities Management, and Compliance services, to Cambridgeshire County Council.

Also acted as the SRO for the SPOKES programme of work delivering the wholesale relocation from Shire Hall, incorporating 19 building projects, additional services were required including planning consultancy services to advise the client, submit and manage planning applications; and project management to lead a number of construction projects through their redevelopment phases covering all RIBA stages and procurement.

*“ Delivering this service to Cambridgeshire enabled the service to transform, to recognise what good looks like and to strive to deliver it, changing perception and improving performance along the way. The project upskilled the team so they could own the transformation and continue the journey going forward.*

*We unearthed a number of challenges relating to data and asset condition and were not afraid to bring these into the open in order to meaningfully manage the estate.*

*The transformation was embraced by a number of key individuals who supported the changes and engaged colleagues along the way, stepping out of their comfort zone and demonstrating previously undiscovered leadership qualities. ”*

**ALEX GEE**  
OPERATIONS DIRECTOR  
PROJECT LEAD



# PROJECT

## HEAD OF PROPERTY

This project was two-fold. Part one was to oversee the provision of Head of Property Services for the Council – pulling together a dysfunctional team with a poor reputation with colleagues and members. Initial team building and cross functional working was required to ensure that the three Property Services (Estates and Asset Management, Facilities Management, and Compliance Services) were working as a consolidated team and not operating in silos. Considerable effort was required to break down barriers and facilitate a more efficient operating model that had the buy-in from the existing team.

Concurrently, a communications offensive was launched to reach out to stakeholders and members to re-establish the services required and expectations, while outlining how the services should work and how best to engage with those services for improved outputs.

Integral to the success of the work was to review and consolidate the data held on the Estate to ensure consistency and to share knowledge on properties, resulting in a considered capital programme giving greater value for money and economies of scale through procurement.

Finally, keeping a close watch on the aspects above to ensure the service continued to deliver high quality outputs and not allowing standards to slip and planning for continued service improvements.

The second part was to provide the provision of a Senior Responsible Officer to oversee the SPOKES Programme – a building programme to relocate staff from Shire Hall in Cambridge to a number of sites across the County, involving 19 individual building projects.

The role was largely to monitor and track budgets and ensure that appropriate governance was in place to capture and record strategic decisions required as the projects developed.

The role included regular briefings to members and working closely with portfolio holders, reporting to monthly Strategic Programme Board, and close contact with finance colleagues to track and monitor spend against budgets.

Also required was the introduction of specialists to support both deficiencies on the Client-side team in respect to planning support and client side project management, designed to ensure that the individual projects had the necessary competence to ensure that the works were delivered on time and to budget, working closely with building contractors to maximise the project benefits.

*Integral to these commissions is a strong working knowledge of practices in other local authorities and how the best practice from that exposure can support the work being delivered, giving members and senior officers confidence in the transformational journey.*



# KEY BENEFITS

The project has seen a number of positive outcomes, including:

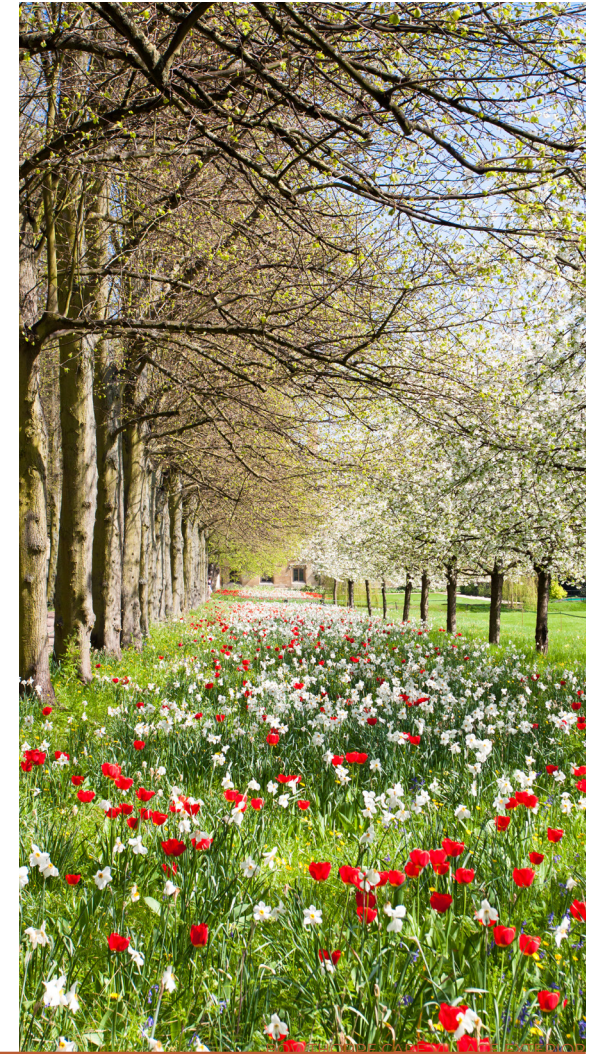
- The delivery of a more cohesive Property function
- Improved service quality and reputation with stakeholders
- Improved calibre of asset data
- The provision of strategy, structure, and governance
- Added professional competency where required.

A formal review of the skills and capabilities of the Property Department were undertaken, identifying improvements in structure leading to service improvements and efficiencies. A targeted strategy of team building was also completed, leading to a cohesive unit working closely together to deliver a more integrated service.

In addition, a communications strategy was developed leading to improvements in the reputation of the section for stakeholders.

By ensuring representation of the team at stakeholder Boards and Committees is achieved, this has led to the consultation of the Property Team by other Directorates, meaning more comprehensive Property involvement in the project.

The impact was largely focussed on delivering internal service improvements and better engagement and outcomes for Directorates.





## CONTACT US

### ALEX GEE

OPERATIONS DIRECTOR  
PROJECT LEAD

 alex.gee@nps.co.uk

 07770 283154