

ADVISORY

# INTERIM HEAD OF PROPERTY

CAMBRIDGESHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL AND A SENIOR RESPONSIBLE OWNER (SRO) TO OVERSEE THE COUNTY'S SPOKES PROGRAMME OF WORK





## ADVISORY OVERVIEW

Norse Consulting provided a Senior Director to act as Interim Head of Property Services, comprising Estates and Asset Management, Facilities Management, and Compliance, to Cambridgeshire County Council.

The company also provided an SRO for the SPOKES programme of work, which focused on the wholesale relocation of services from the county's former headquarters at Shire Hall to other sites across the county.

“ *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  
NORSE CONSULTING



# PROJECT

## HEAD OF PROPERTY

Norse Consulting was contracted to provide a Senior Director to act as Interim Head of Property Services at Cambridgeshire County Council and an SRO for the SPOKES programme of work

The role of the Interim Head of Property Services was to oversee and pull together a dysfunctional team; to work with them to rebuild their reputation and to ensure cohesion and efficiency.

Initial team building and cross functional working was required to ensure 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 effective and 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, with the aim of ensuring consistency and sharing knowledge on properties. The objective was to achieve a considered capital programme, giving greater value for money and economies of scale through procurement.

Finally, keeping a close watch on all these areas, the Interim Head of Property Services was to ensure the service continued to deliver high quality outputs, with no reduction in standards, and to oversee planning for continued service improvements.

The second part was to provide the provision of an SRO to oversee the SPOKES Programme, which aimed to relocate staff from Shire Hall in Cambridge to a number of sites across the county.

This was a complex programme involving 19 individual building projects. It also saw the provision of additional services, including planning consultancy to advise the client; the submission and management of planning applications

and the project management of a number of construction projects through their redevelopment phases, covering all RIBA stages and procurement.

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.

It also included regular briefings to members and working closely with portfolio holders, as well as reporting monthly to the 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 deficiencies on the client-side team in respect to planning support and client-side project management.

It was essential to ensure individual projects had the necessary competence to deliver the works on time and to budget, and to work closely with building contractors to maximise the project benefits.

# IMPACT

The project has seen a number of positive outcomes, including the delivery of a more cohesive Property function within Cambridgeshire County Council.

Service quality, reputation with stakeholders and calibre of asset data have all been improved.

The project has resulted in the provision of strategy, structure, and governance and brought professional competency where required.

A formal review of the skills and capabilities of the county's Property Services was undertaken to identify improvements in structure. These in turn led to service improvements and efficiencies.

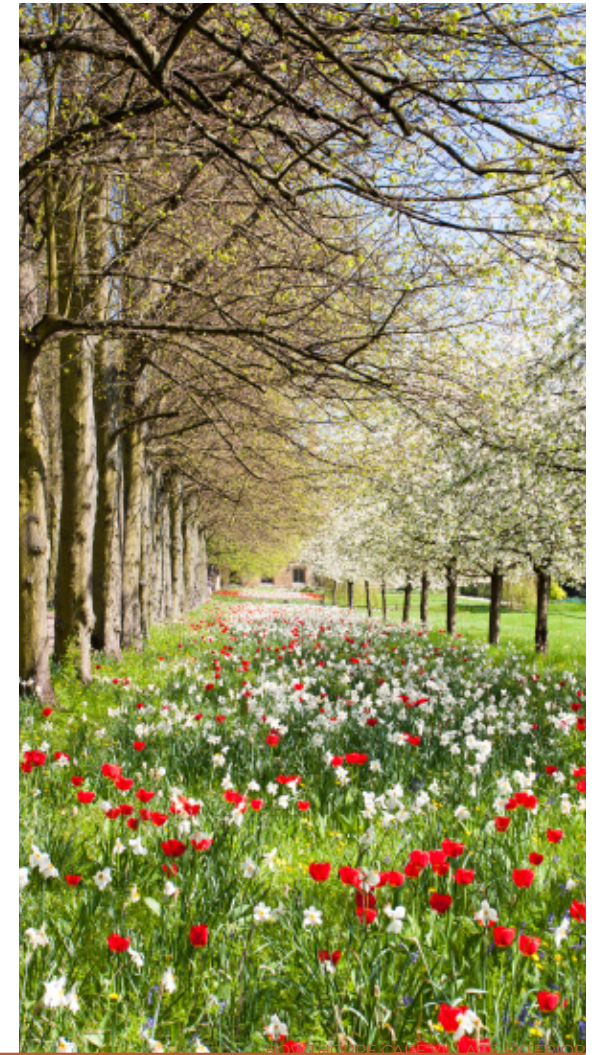
A targeted strategy of team building was also completed, resulting in the creation of a more cohesive unit with the ability to work closely together to deliver a more integrated service.

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

Ensuring representation of the team at stakeholder Boards and Committees has

led to more consultation of the Property team by other Directorates. This has resulted in more comprehensive involvement in the project by those in Property Services.

The impact was largely focused 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