

## Case study:

# Transforming Organisational Performance Through Structural and Cultural Change

## Overview

Hunter Adams partnered with a client facing significant financial and operational pressure to deliver a full-scale organisational transformation. By redefining operating models, restructuring the organisation, and embedding robust HR frameworks, the business is now transitioning to a more streamlined, accountable, and performance-driven culture.

## The Challenge

The organisation was operating without the core foundations required to drive performance and sustainability. There were:

- No formal policies or procedures
- Limited, outdated job descriptions
- An unclear and overinflated organisational structure
- Minimal performance management, applied inconsistently
- High reliance on external funding, which had been significantly reduced

This created an urgent need to reduce costs, improve efficiency, and fundamentally reshape how the organisation operated.

With future funding contingent on adopting a new operational approach, failure to act would have put the organisation's long-term viability at serious risk.

## The Underlying Complexity

At the heart of the challenge was a lack of organisational clarity and accountability.

Roles and responsibilities were poorly defined, governance structures were weak, and the organisation lacked the frameworks needed to manage performance effectively. The structure itself was overly top-heavy and misaligned to the organisation's actual delivery.

At the same time, the transformation required navigating highly sensitive activity, including a voluntary severance programme, while maintaining engagement and morale.

This was not simply a restructure - it was a fundamental shift in culture, leadership, and ways of working.

## The Approach

The senior HR consultant deployed by Hunter Adams led a comprehensive transformation programme, working closely with senior leadership to reshape the organisation from the ground up.

Key elements of the approach included:

- **Co-creating a new operating model:** Working with the CEO and senior leaders to define a clear organisational direction
- **Developing operating and activity plans:** Aligning strategic objectives with practical, deliverable plans across departments
- **Implementing governance and frameworks:** Introducing policies, processes, and performance management systems
- **Restructuring the organisation:** Designing a leaner, more effective structure aligned to business needs
- **Leading a voluntary severance programme:** Delivering a carefully planned and communicated process to reduce costs and overstaffing
- **Building future capability:** Supporting the development of an organisation-specific AI tool and associated learning programme

A critical success factor was continuous stakeholder engagement, ensuring leaders across the organisation were actively involved in shaping and owning the change.

## Overcoming Challenges

The programme presented several complex challenges:

- A lack of initial clarity on the organisation's long-term direction
- An evolving operating model that required ongoing refinement
- Managing uncertainty and sensitivity during the voluntary severance process
- Maintaining engagement and trust across the workforce

These were addressed through:

- Persistent stakeholder engagement with Directors, Boards, and leadership teams
- Carefully timed and structured communication, particularly during sensitive phases
- Thorough planning, including a detailed three-month preparation for the voluntary severance process
- Open, honest conversations, ensuring transparency at all levels of the organisation

This approach helped maintain stability while enabling difficult but necessary change.

## The Outcome

While the transformation is ongoing, the organisation has already achieved significant progress:

- A leaner organisational structure aligned to its future direction
- Increased employee engagement among those remaining
- Improved performance levels and accountability

- Early adoption of a more performance-driven culture
- Clearer alignment between strategic plans and day-to-day activity

The foundations for long-term sustainability and growth are now firmly in place.

## The Impact

The work has delivered meaningful and lasting change:

- Reduced cost base, improving financial sustainability
- Stronger organisational clarity, with defined roles and responsibilities
- Enhanced leadership capability, with greater ownership of performance
- Cultural shift, moving from informal practices to structured, outcome-driven delivery

Importantly, the organisation is now better positioned to meet funder expectations and secure its future.

## Key Lessons

This engagement highlights several important lessons for organisations undertaking large-scale change:

- **Clarity of direction is critical:** Defining the end goal early enables more effective planning
- **Leadership ownership drives success:** Change must be led from within the organisation
- **Communication is everything:** Timing, transparency, and consistency are key, particularly during sensitive transitions
- **Be adaptable:** Large transformation programmes will evolve and require flexibility

## Why Hunter Adams

This project demonstrates Hunter Adams' ability to deliver end-to-end organisational transformation in complex, high-stakes environments.

Through a combination of strategic insight, hands-on delivery, and strong stakeholder management, Hunter Adams helped the client move from uncertainty and inefficiency to a clearer, more sustainable and performance-focused future.

### Ready to navigate complex change with confidence?

Get in touch to see how Hunter Adams can support your organisation with expert HR leadership, flexible resourcing, and delivery you can rely on.

[team.admin@hunteradams.co.uk](mailto:team.admin@hunteradams.co.uk)