



St Edmundsbury
BOROUGH COUNCIL

A570

Cabinet 17 March 2010

Recommendations from Shared Services Steering Group: 12 February 2010

Cabinet Members: All Portfolios

Vice Chairman of Group: Cllr David Ray

1. Shared Services Agenda: Work Programme (Exempt Report A509)

RECOMMENDED:- That

- (1) *the Work Programme outlined in Appendix A to Report A509 be endorsed and that further reports be presented on a service by service basis when the detailed project work had been completed; and***
- (2) *consideration be given to:-***
 - (a) *the reviews of the shared services for ICT and Communications be given priority; and***
 - (b) *the shared service review of Markets be undertaken in conjunction with the Borough Council's review of the operation of its markets.***

On 15 December 2009 the full Council resolved that:-

- (1) *'the status of preferred partner between St Edmundsbury Borough Council and Forest Heath District Council be formally conferred on each Council'; and***
- (2) *'a Member Shared Services Steering Group be established.'***

After this formal endorsement by both Councils, the respective Heads of Service met with their opposite numbers and discussed in detail the feasibility and desirability of service integration. Emanating from these meetings is a timetable for a Work Programme, which was considered by the Shared Services Steering Group on 12 February 2010. The Work Programme is reproduced as Appendix A to this report.

2. County-Wide Shared Services (Exempt Report A510)

RECOMMENDED:- That

- (1) a joint response be made to Suffolk County Council that Forest Heath District Council and St Edmundsbury Borough Council will continue to examine the potential for sharing all of their services in accordance with their agreed Preferred Partner programme but would also wish to be involved in the first stages of county-wide discussions regarding the potential for county-wide public sector collaboration in certain services from 2014 onwards, or sooner if appropriate; and**
- (2) no specific services be identified for collaboration at present but the two Councils are interested in exploring all options provided that the chosen model is consistent with their own vision for service delivery and a strong business case can be made.**

It has been acknowledged at a county level that all Suffolk councils need to consider their central support costs in order to address financial pressures. This issue has been discussed at the Suffolk Local Authority Directors Network Meeting. Initial discussions have identified a list of services which could potentially be examined for county-wide collaboration.

Suffolk County Council has asked district and borough councils to test the issue with elected members and advise them whether they are interested in being involved in the first stages of a joint project. This would not commit a Council to formal involvement and it has been stressed by Suffolk County Council that signing up does not indicate any intent to join current contracts. Council's have also been asked to indicate whether there are either services missing from the identified list, or services identified which they do not feel are suitable for collaboration on a county-wide level. This list was considered by the Steering Group.

Given the strategic partnership between St Edmundsbury Borough Council and Forest Heath District Council agreed in December 2009, and the fact that the two councils are examining the potential to share all their services, it is recommended that the District and Borough Councils submit the above joint response to the County Council.