



St Edmundsbury  
BOROUGH COUNCIL

# B251

## Cabinet 20 October 2010

### Recommendations from the Shared Services Steering Group: 16 September 2010 (Nov10/06)

*Cabinet Member: Cllr John Griffiths Vice Chairman of Group: Cllr David Ray*

#### 1. Shared Services Communications Strategy ( Report B212)

**RECOMMENDED:-**

*That the Shared Services Communications Strategy, as detailed in Appendix A to Report B212, be approved, subject to the inclusion of the following amendments:-*

- (a) the Property, Markets and Car Parks service cluster be added to the priority list of shared services identified for delivery in Phase 1; and*
- (b) additional media stakeholders be added to the list in Appendix I.*

Working together, the Communications teams at Forest Heath District Council (FHDC) and St Edmundsbury Borough Council (SEBC) have produced a Shared Services Communications Strategy to help guide future work.

The Communications Strategy aims to address who does what, when and how. It sets out the role of the Communications Workstream, which will be responsible for external publicity and ensuring internal communications across both Councils are co-ordinated and work efficiently. It also details the need for a shared identity, to help reduce any confusion for people in West Suffolk about new ways of working across council boundaries. Major stakeholders are listed, along with suggested methods of communication, and there are protocols to ensure information to the public is accurate and consistent.

The Steering Group noted that the Strategy needed to be updated on Page 1, to include reference to the recently identified Property, Markets and Car Parks service cluster in the priority list of shared services recognised for delivery in Phase 1. A further addition was also made to the list of media stakeholders detailed on Appendix 1, and the Steering Group agreed that others may be added to this list, as appropriate.

## **2. Information and Communication Technology (ICT) Outline Business Case (Report B213)**

**RECOMMENDED:- That:-**

- (1) the ICT Outline Business Case, as detailed in Appendix 1 to Report B213, be approved; and**
- (2) taking into consideration that it may not be appropriate to recruit a single ICT Manager before the production of the full ICT Business Case, the 'Way Forward', as set out in paragraph 4.1 of Report B213, be approved.**

ICT is one of the services recommended for delivery as a shared service in Phase 1 of the preferred partnership between SEBC and FHDC. Priority was given to this service in Phase 1 as it will be critical in facilitating and expediting the delivery of other shared services, since ICT is a key enabler in how most services across the Councils operate. Furthermore, there is also a clear opportunity for both Councils to deliver savings through reduction in management, duplication of roles and through more efficient use of technology itself.

The Outline Business Case was commissioned in July 2010, following a tender process which involved five potential suppliers. Foresight Consulting was selected on the basis of their previous experience and technical competence. It had been identified that there are no significant barriers to setting up a shared service, and a number of benefits, both financial and non-financial, will be gained. These are referred to in the Outline Business Case.

The consultants have identified that a number of 'differences' exist between the operation of the two ICT Sections and there is a level of uncertainty amongst the two teams about whether these 'differences' will prevent a shared service from operating effectively. However, Foresight Consulting has confirmed in its Outline Business Case and in subsequent meetings that no evidence has been uncovered to suggest this is the case. Inevitably the process of change will be extremely challenging for all involved, and will affect both the users of ICT as well as the staff members in each team. The key to successful delivery will be the appointment of a strong leader to unify the two ICT teams and it is critical that this person is able to provide vision to the new team.

Upon approval of the Outline Business Case, the next steps will be as follows, which are detailed in paragraph 4.1 of Report B213:-

- (a) development of a full, detailed Business Case, including investment costs;
- (b) establishment of a Partnership Architectural Board;
- (c) recruitment of a single ICT Manager;
- (d) formal consultation with staff and unions;
- (e) refinement of the transitional staff structure and appointment to the new structure; and
- (f) development of a Partnership ICT Strategy.

It is anticipated that these transitional activities will be completed by 1 April 2011, with a complete partnership team in place by 1 April 2012.

The Steering Group supported the Outline Business Case; however some concern was expressed that it may not be appropriate to recruit a single ICT Manager before the production of the full Business Case.

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