



St Edmundsbury
BOROUGH COUNCIL

B584

Cabinet 27 April 2011

Recommendations from Shared Services Steering Group: 30 March 2011 (May11/05)

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

1. Protocol for Policy Development (Report B531)

RECOMMENDED:-

That the draft protocol for policy development, attached as Appendix 1 to Report B531, amended to include reference to the involvement of Members in the development process, be endorsed as the way forward for establishing a framework for the development of joint policy documents between Forest Heath District Council and St Edmundsbury Borough Council.

The Protocol will help ensure that when policy is developed it effectively supports and guides the delivery of shared services. This recognises areas of common ground and the benefit from, as far as practical, research, consultation, preparation and drafting being done together.

Under the draft Protocol, all new and revised policy documents must be developed jointly between the two authorities unless there is a compelling reason for not doing so.

The agreement recognises that as two discrete organisations, there may be high level plans and visioning documents, such as corporate plans, which will remain separate, and also that plans drawn up around specific demography or geography, including district wide, will, by necessity, be discrete. However, priorities, plans and particularly actions arising from these discrete documents should be aligned to help delivery, particularly across areas of common ground and that, as far as practicable the research, consultation, preparation and drafting of such is done together.

2. Learning and Development Service: Business Case (Report B536)

RECOMMENDED:-

That the full business case for a shared Learning and Development Service be established between St Edmundsbury Borough Council and Forest Heath District Council, as detailed in Exempt Appendix A to Report B536.

The Learning and Development Service is a small support service with a revenue budget of approximately £230,000 across both Councils. This Service is already lean in respect of staffing numbers, 2.44 full time equivalent staff, and consequently there is little resilience in the separate teams. Activities currently delivered across both Councils are largely similar, the only difference being Member Development, which at Forest Heath District Council (FHDC) is the responsibility of the Learning and Development Team, whereas at St Edmundsbury Borough Council (SEBC) it is within the Democratic Services Section.

Overall there will be a financial saving to the authorities of £2,000 in 2011/2012 and £22,000 from 2012/2013, equating to £69,000 over the four years of the Medium Term Financial Strategy.

Performance data indicates that unit costs compare favourably with the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA) comparators. Currently customer feedback is average, which probably reflects the transition which is taking place in integrating the two teams on a temporary basis using two separate business systems.

The Service is a key support service covering the strategic organisational development remit and the more traditional learning and development offer to both staff and Members.

As part of the overall shared services agenda established between FHDC and SEBC it was agreed that this service was a key enabler to all other services, and as such should be at the beginning of the change agenda.