

**MINUTES OF THE BUCKINGHAMSHIRE
JOINT IMPROVEMENT BOARD**

26 JULY 2007

PRESENT: Councillors Steven Adams (Buckinghamshire CC), Mary Baldwin (Buckinghamshire CC), Bill Bendyshe-Brown (Wycombe DC), Noel Brown (Chiltern DC) (In place of Linda Smith), Bill Chapple (Buckinghamshire CC), Marion Clayton (Buckinghamshire CC) (In place of Peter Cartwright), Frank Downes (Buckinghamshire CC), Michael Edmonds (Aylesbury Vale DC) and Roger Reed (South Bucks DC)

APOLOGIES: Councillors Peter Cartwright (Buckinghamshire CC) and Linda Smith (Chiltern DC)

1. ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN

RESOLVED –

That Councillor Chapple be elected Chairman of the Buckinghamshire Joint Improvement Board (JIB) until May 2008.

2. ELECTION OF VICE CHAIRMAN

RESOLVED –

That Councillor Edmonds be elected Vice Chairman of the Buckinghamshire JIB until May 2008.

3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Baldwin declared a personal interest in regard to agenda item number 10 (Demand Led transport) as a trustee of Age Concern.

4. PROGRAMME DIRECTOR

The Chairman took the opportunity to thank Stephanie Moffat for all the work she had carried out whilst acting as Programme Director.

5. PRESS RELEASES

The Chief Executives of all five councils were asked to ensure that their respective communications departments were consulted on the content of Press Releases prior to information being made public.

6. PROGRAMME MANAGEMENT

The Board received a report providing an overview of progress, as at 12 July 2007, and also on future milestones for each of the work streams and projects in the

pathfinder programme. Members were advised that interviews for the Programme Director were being held on the 26th and 27th July, 2007, and that programme support would need to be recruited in the near future.

£200,000 of the pathfinder budget had been allocated to support the work streams and projects but the combined estimated costs of developing the business case for each work stream and project totalled £408,505. The JIB would need to consider and prioritise the monies allocated for each of the projects. However, a bid for Capacity Building Funding of £346,500, relating to the pathfinder programme had been submitted to the South East Improvement and Efficiency Board. The bid requested funding towards the costs of the shared services and customer services projects, as well as work to be undertaken on cultural/change management. It was anticipated that a decision on the bid would be made in the next 2-3 weeks and, this might affect how the JIB wished to prioritise the budget.

Members commented on the following:-

- that future reports needed to make clear, where appropriate, the level of involvement of Town and Parish Councils in each work stream / project
- Clarification was sought on the role of the County Council's transformation partner, RSe, in the pathfinder projects. Future reports should give details of whether project scoping work was to be undertaken by consultants or by council officers.
- that it was important to ensure that all work undertaken was of a high quality
- clarification was sought on the line management arrangements and the reporting responsibilities of the Programme Director. The Director would report to the Chairman of the Joint Improvement Board, and be responsible to the Chief Executive at the County Council, as the employing organisation, for pay and rations.
- that most projects needed to provide more information on the estimated savings to be made and other benefits that would be realised before the JIB could prioritise the budget.
- that the Programme Director be requested to provide a budget variance report to each JIB meeting.

It was agreed that initial work to progress the business cases for the individual projects needed to continue as this would assist the JIB in prioritising the budget, it was –

RESOLVED –

- (1) That programme management fund monies, for the moment, of £10,000 to commence work on the implementation of the Communications Strategy, and £18,000 to develop proposals for the 2008 concessionary travel scheme, be approved.

- (2) That projects be asked to report more detailed business cases to the JIB at a special meeting be held in early September.
- (3) That a decision on prioritising the pathfinder budget for work stream / projects, apart from those mentioned at (1) above, be deferred until September 2007.

7. COMMUNICATIONS STRATEGY

The Board received a report detailing the Joint Communications Strategy for the Pathfinder for ETTW which had been developed by the Bucks County and District Communications Group and subsequently been considered by the County and District Chief Executives' Group. The Strategy included a number of protocols which set out initial guidelines on communicating with Members, project teams, the JIB and Leaders' Group, and on branding and the media. It was emphasised that both the Strategy and the protocols would be dynamic documents that would need to evolve and change to reflect future developments of the pathfinder programme.

Members commented on the following:-

- that the top line statement 'Buckinghamshire Councils – Better Services, Better Value' needed to be reworked.
- it was clarified that any future changes to communications protocols would come back to the JIB for approval.
- clarification was sought on the order that information would be disseminated to the JIB, Council Leaders, Members and the press.
- that communication / engagement with all Members, including backbenchers, would be crucial. To assist with this, it would be important to ensure that all Members were made aware of how they could access the extranet site.
- that the Members' seminar due to be held in October 2007 needed to be well advertised.
- that it was important that the communications protocol mentioned in the waste pathfinder project was developed as a part of the pathfinder Communications Strategy.

RESOLVED –

- (1) That, subject to the above comments, the Communications Strategy and associated protocols, be approved.
- (2) That initial funding to commence work on the implementation of the Communications Strategy be approved, as detailed at minute 6, resolution (1).
- (3) That an agenda item on 'communications' be included as the last item on future JIB agendas.

8. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

The Board received a report setting out the scope for the pathfinder community engagement work stream and were informed that there would be one agreed framework across Buckinghamshire that would operate at two levels, the local level and the strategic level.

The JIB was informed that the project would use the geographical building blocks of the Getting Closer to Communities (GC2C) model as outlined in the pathfinder bid and would aim to streamline and strengthen current processes and look to improve multi-agency working.

Members commented on the following:-

- that it would be beneficial for pathfinder to learn any lessons from the community engagement and other work being undertaken by the Milton Keynes, Oxfordshire Buckinghamshire (MKOB) Improvement Board, which would be delivering its findings by March 2008.
- it was clarified that the community mapping referred to in the report involved analysing work that had already been done, and would not involve undertaking new mapping work unless gaps in information were identified.
- that the Board would like more detailed information to be provided on the estimated savings to be made and other benefits that would be realised, in order for funding to be allocated as part of the pathfinder budget prioritisation process.
- that it was crucial that the project involved and embraced all sections of the community, including children and young people.

RESOLVED –

That a decision on allocating funding for the pathfinder community engagement project be deferred until September 2007.

9. PROCUREMENT

The Board received a report setting out the scope for the pathfinder procurement work stream. Members were advised that as part of the governance arrangements, it was proposed to establish a Procurement Project Board, comprising the Directors responsible for procurement in each of the five Councils, which would need to be up and running by November 2007.

Members commented:-

- that the project needed to provide more information on the estimated savings to be made and other benefits that would be realised, in order for funding to be allocated as part of the pathfinder budget prioritisation process.

- that this project had the potential to also benefit Town and Parish Councils.

RESOLVED –

That a decision on allocating funding for the pathfinder procurement project be deferred until September 2007.

10. SUPPORT SERVICES PARTNERSHIP

The Board received a report detailing the objectives for this project, and that the intention was to produce a costed business case by December 2007 on the options for partnership working across support services for the five Councils, and other local partners where appropriate. Views were sought from the JIB on the services to be considered as part of the scope of the project, as outlined in paragraph 3.1 of the report.

Members commented on the following:-

- it was clarified that Council staff would be involved in suggesting ways that the project's objectives could be met, and that consultants would be used, in the main, to challenge and validate the options developed for better partnership working across support services.
- that it would be crucial for staff to be kept well informed of the work undertaken during this project.
- that many professional officer groups e.g. legal, audit and finance, had been liaising for some time on the issues that would be addressed as a part of this project.
- that the Board would like to receive a Gantt chart at the next meeting with more detailed information on Phase 1 of the project.
- that the Board would like more detailed information to be provided on the estimated savings to be made and other benefits that would be realised, in order for funding to be allocated as part of the pathfinder budget prioritisation process.

RESOLVED –

That a decision on allocating funding for the pathfinder support services partnership project be deferred until September 2007.

11. CUSTOMER SERVICES

The Board received a report setting out the objectives and scope of the customer service project. Whilst exploring how best to deliver an integrated approach to the design and delivery of customer services across Buckinghamshire, the project would also look at customer expectations.

Members commented on the following:-

- that the project needed to provide more information on the potential savings to be made and other benefits / cost efficiencies that would be realised, in order for funding to be allocated as part of the pathfinder budget prioritisation process.
- that the Board wanted the scope of this project to include looking at customer services that might be delivered by Town and Parish Councils.

RESOLVED –

That a decision on allocating funding for the customer services partnership project be deferred until September 2007.

12. DEMAND LED TRANSPORT

The Board received a report outlining this project which was being undertaken in two parts, looking at efficiency savings in delivering the 2008 concessionary travel scheme and investigating opportunities for improving the efficiency of the management of Dial-A-Ride schemes. The JIB was informed that there was some urgency to progress the work on concessionary travel as the District Councils were required to have a new concessionary travel scheme in place by April 2008.

Members were advised that school transport and social services transport had not been included as a part of this project as this would make the scope of the project unmanageable at this time. The County was currently market testing options for the delivery of school transport and the results of this would be available in the autumn.

RESOLVED –

- (1) That initial funding to commence work on the implementation of the 2008 concessionary travel scheme part of this project be approved, as detailed at minute 6, resolution (1).
- (2) That a decision on funding the dial-a ride element of the project to be deferred until September 2007

13. WASTE

The Board received a report relating to the establishment of a “Joint Waste Authority” that would maintain local democratic accountability whilst achieving the pathfinder objectives of cost reduction, better use of capacity and improved service delivery. It was clarified for Members that the project’s scope included the waste management functions of the five Councils, although the strategic planning function, which was a statutory function, would remain with the County Council.

RESOLVED –

That a decision on allocating funding for the waste pathfinder project be deferred until

September 2007.

14. THE DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING

It was agreed that the Board should meet before the leaders group meeting on 19th September and that a special meeting should therefore be convened