

**CHILTERN DISTRICT COUNCIL
SOUTH BUCKS DISTRICT COUNCIL**

**MINUTES of the Meeting of the
CHILTERN AND SOUTH BUCKS JOINT COMMITTEE
held on 13 FEBRUARY 2012**

PRESENT: Councillor N M Rose - Chairman

Councillors: A Busby
Mrs A Cranmer
Mrs I A Darby
Mrs M Harker
B Lidgate
R Reed
D Smith
M R Smith
M Stannard
Mrs J Woolveridge

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE: Councillors A J Garth and D W Phillips

7 MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting held on 19 January 2012, copies of which had been previously circulated, were agreed by the Committee and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

8 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

9 STAFF BRIEFINGS

The Joint Committee received a report giving feedback on the staff briefings held in January at both Chiltern District Council and South Bucks District Council. It was noted that the issues were broadly the same at both authorities, with apprehension and uncertainty on what the shared arrangements would mean for individual staff.

The Committee noted the importance of keeping staff at all levels of both authorities informed. A list of Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) had been developed for staff which would be updated as the process progressed. In particular, both Leaders confirmed that they would welcome discussions with staff if staff wished to engage in that way.

After noting the need to progress the process to remove the uncertainty for staff, but also acknowledging the need for the process to be done correctly with solid plans, it was

RESOLVED –

That the report be noted.

10 PROGRAMME AND RISK REPORT

The Committee received the Programme Management Report, setting out the budget, milestones to date, and the Risk Register. It was noted that these were 'live' documents and would update as the process progressed.

Members acknowledged that the only cost so far had been the recruitment of additional HR support. Regarding the costs associated with 'Transformation – Stage 2', it was noted that these would become clearer once the tender exercise was initiated in April / May.

After emphasising the need for budgetary control to be as tight as possible, it was

RESOLVED –

That the report be noted.

11 EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC

RESOLVED –

That under section 100 (A) (4) of the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended) the public be excluded from the meeting for the following item(s) of business on the grounds that they involved the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act.

12 SHARED MANAGEMENT TEAM: PROPOSED OUTLINE STRUCTURE

Chiltern District Council and South Bucks District Council had agreed to enter into a joint project to share management as a means of improving the resilience and quality of services, and to reduce costs.

The business plan, endorsed by both Councils, had proposed a shared senior management team comprising eleven posts – a Chief Executive, 2 Directors and 8 Heads of Service. The report before the Committee proposed an outline structure with 8 Heads of Service roughly based on existing service delivery models. The Joint Committee were asked to agree the outline structure prior to consultation and formal consideration by the Joint Appointments and Implementation Committee (JAIC).

Members acknowledged the importance of flexibility in the structure in order to accommodate changing priorities. It was also noted that existing joint working arrangements with other authorities – for example, Chiltern's joint working with Wycombe on Waste, and potentially on Building Control – would need to be

assimilated. As such it would be necessary to keep the arrangements under review.

Members noted that some of the Heads of Service roles seemed larger than others, indicating that salaries could also be different. The need for eight Heads of Service posts was also questioned; it was suggested that a review of job sizes and salaries was required before the number of posts needed could be determined.

In response, Members were advised that it was important that the structure was reasonably similar to that in operation at both Chiltern and South Bucks in order not to impede the transition to shared arrangements. The outline structure represented a reasonable fit to facilitate that change. Similarly, it was important not to have, for example, another Director, since the flatter management structure provided greater flexibility. The outline structure proposed would deliver the savings articulated in the Business Case. It was noted that the posts could be rationalised in the future as appropriate, potentially producing further savings.

It was also confirmed that the National Local Government Employers – who had completed the job evaluations for the Chief Executive and Director posts – had been asked to undertake a preliminary review of the Heads of Service posts. The results would be available for the next meeting of the JAIC.

Concern was expressed at the potential retention of staff – who would not have a role in the revised structure – to support the initial transition phase, and to provide capacity for other major projects being undertaken by the authorities. Members were advised that this would be addressed on a case-by-case basis and such staff only utilised where such retention positively aided the transition, or was critical to the delivery of a key project.

Regarding the outline structure, the Committee made the following comments:

Property & Asset Management, Engineering, Energy and Leisure were considered to be linked. It was felt important that this connection be achieved if the services were under different Heads of Service, but that a cross cutting approach needed to be taken to asset management. It was also suggested that Property & Asset Management could be included under the Director of Resources instead of the Director of Services.

Similarly, it was noted that Community Safety could sit under either the Head of Community – as favoured by the Portfolio Holders for Community at each authority – or the Head of Health and Housing (for the enforcement aspects).

The Joint Committee acknowledged that there were not necessarily right or wrong answers to where particular services would sit; it was the integration between services that would be of key importance. It was also considered important not to try and impose existing Cabinet Portfolio structures when considering the management structure as these differed between the two authorities. It was agreed that the outline structure as detailed in the report be the starting point for consultation and formal consideration by the JAIC.

Regarding the next stage, Members were advised that there would be a briefing for senior staff and staff side representatives, with an email to all staff; this was provisionally scheduled for 22 February. The JAIC would consider the proposal, responses and amended details, including job roles and terms and conditions at their meeting on 4 April. Briefings with affected staff would then follow immediately with a formal consultation. After noting that the consultation period could impact on the timing of the JAIC meeting scheduled for May, it was

RESOLVED –

- 1 That the comments of the Joint Committee regarding the outline structure be noted.**
- 2 That the outline structure and proposals detailed in the report be agreed as the basis for consultation with staff.**

Note: Councillor A Garth entered the meeting at 5.24pm.

The meeting ended at 5.48 pm