

## CHILTERN DISTRICT COUNCIL

### MINUTES of the Meeting of the CHILTERN AND SOUTH BUCKS JOINT COMMITTEE held on 20 JULY 2015

**PRESENT:** Councillor I A Darby - Chairman  
" R Bagge - Vice Chairman

Councillors: D Anthony  
N Naylor  
I A Darby  
G K Harris  
P E C Martin  
M R Smith  
M J Stannard  
F S Wilson

**APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE** were received from Councillors Egleton and L Sullivan

#### 32 MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting of the Joint Committee held on 25 March 2015 were agreed by the Committee and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

#### 33 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

#### 34 SHARED ICT STRATEGY

Members received a presentation from the Head of Business Support which provided an overview of the Strategy and the key aspects covered were:-

- Strategy Recommendations and reasons for recommendations
- Explanation of the current networks operating at the Chiltern and South Bucks District Councils and the need for improvement to the networks to improve integration and development of shared services between the two authorities
- Limitations of the current networks in respect of supporting joint working
- Proposed unified network, which would ensure the two authorities remain as two separate legal entities and to improve support for joint working
- Creation of a virtual desktop infrastructure
- Introduction of Mobile Working through VDI and NDL awi which would improve efficiency and introduce a brief casing functionality

- Automation of Service Delivery – this was to be an improvement to the service for residents to enable more self service via the Council websites, and would be driven by the Customer Services Strategy

Comments and questions were raised by members in relation to the perceived benefits of the developments which were based on a channel shift of end to end processes and that this was for both external and internal customers. Irrespective of shared services each Council remained as two legal entities and this required separate domain names for each Council.

The Acting Chief Executive advised that there was a need to develop uniform branding for shared services while retaining the sovereignty of each Council.

In response to a member's question, the Head of Business Support explained the identified risks that the Councils were currently in a state of flux as was the IT Industry and there was a need to invest in additional support to enable the implementation of changes and have appropriate specific skill sets to ensure that developments are achieved and maintained. The proposed relatively flat structure provided capacity in the team and did not encourage silos of experience but rather the opportunity for skills growth.

It was confirmed that the proposed arrangements in respect of network security were sufficiently secure to meet Government's PSN standards.

The Director of Resources added that the development of the ICT Strategy would benefit from the establishment and input of a small Steering Group of members to act as a sounding board to assist officers.

The Head of Business Support confirmed that the projected cost was £764,000 and a proportion of the budget was to buy in expertise to implement the developments and for project management. The move to a unified network was a significant piece of work hence the need for additional capacity above what would be needed once the new network was established and in operation.

In summary the strategy had three intended outcomes:-

- To enable improved customer services as identified by the services that ICT supports
- To increase the efficiency and value for money of ICT services
- Improve the robustness and reliability of ICT services

The strategy had three key recommendations, which were

- i) That the two Councils converge their IT networks into a single integrated ICT infrastructure
- ii) Mobile working be facilitated through a combination of implementing virtual desktop infrastructure (VDI) and building on the existing NDL awi estate
- iii) Automation of service delivery, where appropriate, is enabled by extending the use of NDL awi

The two Councils had already progressed some way down this route as shared services had developed.

Taking this direction will significantly bind together how the Councils deliver services. However it will also make them a larger entity when working with suppliers or other organisations. The direction of technical change was one that the two Councils would need to pursue if they were working individually, by collaborating they will be able to reduce the cost of change by reducing duplication.

The intention was to put the two Councils in the optimum position by 2018 to then decide how their ICT estate should be further developed to best support the needs of services. The work would extend the options available to the Councils, for example transferring the infrastructure to cloud environments or adopting Software as a Services (SaaS) model.

**RESOLVED:**

- i) That the proposed strategy for joint ICT working between Chiltern and South Bucks District Councils up to 2018 be adopted including the unification of their networks; and**
- ii) That each Council agree the funding of the programme set out in Appendix 4 of the strategy totalling £763k; and**
- iii) That the proposed organisational structure in Appendix 6 be supported.**

**35 PLANNING SERVICE REVIEW**

Consideration was given to the report which sought agreement that the Councils should commence a Planning Service review encompassing Development Management / Control, Enforcement and Planning Admin/ Support, rather than initially undertake only an Enforcement Service review.

Initial agreement of the Joint Committee on 25 March 2015 was to undertake a review of the Planning Enforcement Service; but since the elections in May 2015 there had been a change in leadership at South Bucks District Council and a change to Cabinet members for Sustainable Development at each authority it had been decided to reconsider the scope of the review. Informal discussions had taken place involving the two Cabinet Members for Sustainable Development, who had indicated that they would prefer to undertake a review of Development Management / Control, Enforcement and Planning Admin / Support, rather than to initially undertake a service review which was more limited in scope and only dealt with Enforcement.

It was agreed that there should be a balance between the level of detail and customer engagement, and the speed with which the service review was to be carried out. External support to the review would be provided by Trevor Roberts Associates, and by IDoX providers of the UniForm application used by both planning services.

The next step was for the project support officer and the Head of Service to develop a project plan and initial timetable for the service review, to then be discussed at the Members Working Group to agree the aims, objectives and constraints of the service review.

**RESOLVED:**

- i) That a Planning Service review be commenced encompassing Development Management / Control, Enforcement and Planning Admin / Support;**
- ii) That a Member Working Group be established which comprised of 5 Members from each authority; and**
- iii) That nominations for the Working Group be agreed by the relevant Portfolio Holders from each authority by 4 August 2015 and forwarded to the Project Support Officer to schedule the first meeting.**

**36 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.**

**37 BUSINESS SUPPORT SERVICE SHARED SERVICE REVIEW**

The Joint Committee received a report setting out the result of a shared service review of the Business Support Service. The report detailed the business case, the conclusion of which was based on the benefits and costs in terms of finances, resilience and quality of service, and the views of service users that was for a single shared service. The proposed structure was one that would support the ICT Strategy of the Councils.

**RECOMMENDED –**

- i) That the establishment of a joint service is proven and that both Councils should proceed to establish a joint service;**
- ii) That staff in the respective services can be shared to work across the two local authority areas.**

**RESOLVED –**

- iii) That the joint service to be implemented, as described in Section 4 and 5 of the report which proposed co-location for the service at Amersham and Capswood, be agreed;
- iv) That the cost sharing arrangements split 57% Chiltern District Council and 43% South Bucks District Council and set out in the financial benefits (Section 6 Table 10) of the report be agreed;
- v) That the high level implementation plan (Section 8) be agreed as the basis for reviewing progress in line with delegations and responsibilities decided for the implementation phase of the service review;
- vi) That the potential full year net savings of £62,322 against the current operating costs is taken account of in the authorities' respective financial plans, split 57% for CDC and 43% for SBDC;
- vii) That the proposed timetable for implementation as detailed in Section 8 be agreed; and
- viii) That the need for capital investment to replace the ICT network infrastructure at both Councils be noted.

**38 NEXT MEETING:**

**RESOLVED:**

**That the next meeting of the Joint Committee was to be held on Monday 16 November 2015 at 6.00pm at South Bucks District Council.**

**The meeting ended at 6.19pm**