

**REDDITCH BOROUGH COUNCIL AND
BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL**

SHARED SERVICES BOARD

26th January 2012 at 5.30pm

COMMITTEE ROOM 2, TOWN HALL, REDDITCH

Present: Councillors Carole Gandy (Chair), Michael Braley, Malcolm Hall and Bill Hartnett (Redditch Borough Council).

Councillors Margaret Sherrey, Mark Bullivant (substitute for Cllr Hollingworth), Steve Colella and Mike Webb (Bromsgrove District Council).

Also in attendance:

Cllr Kit Taylor (Observer, BDC)

Officers: Kevin Dicks, Sue Hanley, Helen Mole and Deb Poole.

Notes: Steve Skinner.

1. APOLOGIES

An apology for absence was received on behalf of Cllr Roger Hollingworth (BDC).

2. MINUTES

the minutes of the previous meeting of the Board held on 10th November 2011 were agreed as a correct record.

3. MATTERS ARISING

In response to a Member's query (Cllr Colella), Mr Dicks agreed to provide a summary of posts created / posts lost as previously provided to Cllr Hartnett.

CONFIDENTIALITY

These notes are an open public record of proceedings of the Board.

[Meetings of the Board are not subject to statutory Access to Information requirements; but information relating to individual post holders and/or employee relations matters would nonetheless not be revealed to the press or public.]

4. **PROGRESS REPORT**

The Board considered the latest report on the progress of Shared Services.

The Chief Executive took Members through the report and provided updates and explanation of specific points of detail as they arose.

Key points noted were as follows:

a) **Shared Services Proposals - Close of Consultation**

Mr Dicks reported on the outcomes of the recent major consultation exercise on the latest round of Shared Services proposals, which had closed in December. A large number of comments had been received, as detailed separately in the Progress Report where significant.

He understood all Trade Union concerns now to have been met.

b) **Transformation Programme**

Ms Poole took Members through the Transformation item, during consideration of which Members considered to what extent Redditch and Bromsgrove Councils were sharing their experience of sharing services and transforming to date. Mr Dicks advised Members how the Councils were currently working together with Stoke City Council and the Vanguard Academy, and further networking with other local authorities.

Members acknowledged that most other Councils were not as advanced as Redditch and Bromsgrove in this respect, but were keen, as well as sharing current good practice, not to lose sight of their own agendas first.

Mr Dicks added that Bromsgrove and Redditch Councils had learnt from their experience so far how current interventions had sometimes tended to generate a 'silo mentality'. It had been learnt that reviews needed to be more cross-cutting between departments, other authorities and other agencies. This learning would strongly influence the next reviews.

He advised that the crucial thing was to take into account full circumstances every time and that key local partners were on board to participate in this. Previous target-driven activity had prompted a very different approach, which now had to be entirely rethought.

Members agreed that although the 'target mentality' had brought problems, some degree of measurement was still required to help Members keep track of progress and the benefits of shared services and transformation.

Mr Dicks responded that new measures being developed ought to be more effective than the previous indicators.

c) 'Live' Shared Services – Policy, Performance and Partnerships

Mr Dicks explained current arrangements and redistribution of responsibilities, following the departure of the Director of Policy, Performance and Partnerships.

This provided the opportunity for further realignments, which would be cost neutral to both Councils.

Further information would be provided to Members by the time of the next Board meeting.

d) 'Live' Shared Services – Internal Audit

Members queried the view that the Shared Internal Audit Service was now fully operational ('Green' in the traffic light system), a point picked up earlier by the Redditch Audit and Governance Committee.

It was **AGREED this service should be recategorised as 'Amber.**

e) 'Live' Shared Services – Property Services

Members similarly queried whether the Shared Property Service presently warranted a 'Green' grading.

It was **AGREED this service should be recategorised as 'Amber.**

f) Financial Reports

Whilst accepting that the information it contained was technically correct, Members considered the Summary Financial Position appendix a little hard to follow. They therefore asked for a review of the presentation of financial information before the next report.

It was **AGREED that**

progress to date be noted, as detailed in the Progress report, subject to Members' comments and any specific further actions, as recorded above.

5. NEXT MEETING

Members noted that the next meeting of the Board would be held on 8th March 2012 at the Bromsgrove DC Conference Room commencing at 5.30 pm, as previously scheduled.

The meeting commenced at 5.30 pm and closed at 6.40 pm.