

## **Joint Committee: 8 October 2015**

### **Progress on reconstitution of Worcestershire Shared Services Partnership and management restructuring of Worcestershire Regulatory Services**

#### **Recommendations**

The Joint Committee is recommended to:

1. Note the content of this report
2. Acknowledge the contribution to the success of WRS made by Mark Kay and Chris Phillips

#### **Contribution to Priorities**

Reconstitution of the Worcestershire Shared Services Partnership and restructuring of WRS management will contribute directly to delivery of partner authorities' priorities for economic, social and environmental well-being, including the agreed priorities for WRS set out in the WRS Service Plan 2015/16 and WRS Business Plan 2015/18.

#### **Summary**

Partner councils are progressing approval of the recommendations agreed by this committee in June. Two councils have completed the approval process with three others scheduled to do so by the end of October.

The County Council has not yet confirmed a date when this committee's recommendations will be considered by its cabinet as it is considering other possible arrangements for provision of its trading standards services. As noted below this may have implications if the necessary unanimity cannot be achieved.

Following consultation with staff and recognised trades unions good progress has been made implementing the restructuring of WRS management. Simon Wilkes becomes the new Head of Service from 28 September with other key team members taking up their posts on the same day.



## **Background**

At its meeting on 25 June 2015 this committee agreed to recommend partner councils dissolve the current Worcestershire Shared Services Partnership on 31 March 2016 and constitute a new partnership comprising the six district councils on 1 April 2016 along with a service level agreement between the new partnership and County Council for the provision of trading standards services.

At this meeting this committee also approved a new management structure for Worcestershire Regulatory Services for consultation with staff and recognised trades unions together with arrangements for recruitment following finalisation of the structure after consultation.

## **Reconstitution of the Worcestershire Shared Services Partnership**

Bromsgrove DC and Redditch BC approved this committee's recommendations at meetings of their councils in July.

The cabinets/ executives of Malvern Hills DC, Wychavon DC and Wyre Forest DC all considered this committee's recommendations during the summer and made recommendations for approval to their respective councils. The councils of Wychavon DC and Wyre Forest DC will consider them at their meetings on 30 September whilst council at Malvern Hills will consider them when it meets on 20 October.

The County Council has not yet confirmed a date when this committee's recommendations will be considered by its cabinet as it is considering other possible arrangements for provision of its trading standards services. These discussions are on going and an oral update will be provided to the meeting.

Worcester City Council has decided to defer consideration of this matter until the County Council position is clear.

## **WRS Senior Management Structure**

Consultation with staff and recognised trades unions did not result in any objections to the proposed future management structure for Worcestershire Regulatory Services. Comments received related to the proposed process for ring-fencing of current staff to new posts and the application of selection procedures defined within the host authority's human resources policies. A number of minor modifications were made in response to these comments.

The appointments sub committee agreed by this committee on 25 June met on 9 September to interview for the post of Head of Worcestershire Regulatory Services. It agreed to appoint Simon Wilkes who commenced in post on 28 September.

Interviews were held on 25th September for the posts of Environmental Health and Trading Standards Manager and Technical Services Manager. David Mellors and Mark Cox were appointed to these roles and commence in post on 28<sup>th</sup> September. Susan Garratt was slotted into the new post of Licensing and Support Manager from 1 September.

The remaining new post of Business and relationship manager will be advertised externally within the next few weeks.

Mark Kay, Business Manager and Chris Phillips, Trading standards manager both agreed to take voluntary compulsory redundancy as part of the restructuring process. They will leave at the end of January and March next year respectively and I would like to formally acknowledge the enormous contribution they have made to the success of WRS.

## **Financial Implications**

The restructuring of management will create an annual saving of approximately £140,000. This will contribute significantly to meeting the reduced financial operating envelope from 2016/17 onwards.

There are one off costs of change in respect of unavoidable redundancy costs. These will be shared between the partners as previously agreed.

## **Legal Implications**

As mentioned in my report to the meeting on 25 June, the approach to reconstitution of the shared services partnership depends for its success on the unanimous agreement of all the current and future partners. Whilst the current direction of travel outlined in this report is positive, a decision by the County Council to make alternative arrangements for the provision of its trading standards services may mean the necessary unanimity cannot be secured. If this happens the extant partnership agreement will continue in force and further proposals will have to be brought forward for consideration by this committee.



## **Risk**

As noted above there are risks in relation to securing the unanimity necessary to dissolve and reconstitute the partnership.

The outcome of the management restructuring means there is little risk to future operational service delivery and implementation of the current business plan for Worcestershire Regulatory Services

## **Sustainability**

This report outlines the significant steps that have been taken to ensure the future financial and operational sustainability of WRS and the Worcestershire Shared Service partnership.

## **Contact Points**

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## **Background Papers**

*'Future arrangements for Worcestershire Shared Services Joint Committee and Worcestershire Regulatory Services'* – report of Acting Head of WRS and Chair of WRS Management Board – Worcestershire Shared Services Joint Committee – 25 June 2015

*'Creating and delivering a sustainable regulatory partnership for Worcestershire'* – report of Chair of WRS Management Board – Worcestershire Shared Services Joint Committee – 19 February 2015

*'Business Plan for Worcestershire Regulatory Services 2015-2018'*

Worcestershire Shared Services Partnership Agreement 1 June 2010