

BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL AND REDDITCH BOROUGH COUNCIL

SHARED SERVICES BOARD

28th MAY 2009 at 7.00pm

THE COUNCIL HOUSE, BROMSGROVE

PRESENT:

Councillors Roger Hollingworth (Chairman) and Mike Webb (Bromsgrove District Council)

Councillors Carole Gandy and Colin MacMillan (Redditch Borough Council)

Observer: Councillor Geoff Denaro (Bromsgrove District Council)

Officers in Attendance: Kevin Dicks, Sue Hanley and Karen Firth.

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Bill Hartnett and Jean Luck.

Concerns were expressed at the lack of full cross-party attendance at the meeting.

2. MINUTES OF LAST MEETING AND MATTERS ARISING

The minutes of the meeting of the Board held on 30 March 2009 were confirmed as a correct record.

There were no matters arising.

2. PROGRESS REPORT

Member received a progress report on the overall Shared Services project, quick wins, medium term wins, production of the full business case, the Worcestershire Enhanced Two Tier Programme and other areas of joint working. Mr Dicks highlighted key points and responded to Members' comments and questions as indicated below.

Quick Wins – Elections

In response to a Member query on the risks associated with the IT transfer at RBC and the possibility of an early Parliamentary Election, Mr Dicks advised that officers had done a detailed risk assessment and agreed that the best time for the IT transfer was immediately following the European and County Council Elections in June. In response to a Member query, Mr Dicks explained how associated IT costs referred to in the report would be apportioned equally between both Councils. Members commented that only costs associated with shared services should be attributed to the shared service and that costs each authority would have incurred anyway should be excluded.

Quick Wins – Community Safety

Mr Dicks updated Members on the current position with regard to the recruitment process.

Quick Wins – Equalities and Diversity

Attention was drawn to the progress made in this area.

Quick Wins – Member Development

Mr Dicks referred to the progress with regard to descriptions for Members' roles.

Medium Term Wins - ICT

The draft business case was reported to be on target and would be brought to the next meeting of the Board. This would need to address the question of who would be lead authority.

Medium Term Wins – CCTV/Lifeline

Initial feedback had been received from the consultant and indicated that either Council site could accommodate all the necessary equipment within their control rooms. Shift patterns were an area of concern and HR were involved in the ongoing review.

Medium Term Wins – Economic Development

Mr Dicks indicated that this was a major area of concern. Although he felt a North Worcestershire Strategy was the right approach, there was a lack of progress to date and little time left for a detailed business case to be produced by 30 June.

It was AGREED

that Mr Dicks maintain pressure for the delivery of a business case for a North Worcestershire Strategy but also pursue the possibility of a business case for a joint Redditch/Bromsgrove approach.

Business Case

Mr Dicks advised that initially he would just do a quality review of the draft business case and would share this with Directors. He would feedback to Serco who would then issue a revised draft business case which would be shared with the respective Corporate Management Teams. Attention was drawn to the timeline for the briefing of the political leadership, other Members, staff and the formal decision-making process. No officers would be present at the Member briefings provided by Serco.

WORCESTERSHIRE ENHANCED TWO TIER PROGRAMME (WETT)

Mr Dicks drew attention to the general support for the development of a business case for Regulatory Services (i.e. Licensing, Environmental Health & Trading Standards). In response to a lack of general consensus on what areas should be the next priorities and driven by local need, Bromsgrove and Redditch had pushed for Internal Audit and Property Services as the next two priorities. Mr Dicks advised that there were issues about the quality of Internal Audit provided to other councils by Worcester City which would need to be addressed as part of the future business case.

With regard to Regulatory Services, Members were informed that it was the WETT Programme Board's view that this should be hosted by a district not the County and it had queried whether Redditch or Bromsgrove would be interested. Mr Dicks indicated that he was happy to consider this but this would need to be done in the context of the outcome of the Serco business case and capacity requirements. Members of the Board shared the view that WETT developments should not compromise the joint Redditch/Bromsgrove agenda.

Mr Dicks also commented that he wished Youth and Community to be escalated up the WETT agenda with a view to service responsibility at district level.

Other Areas

Procurement – Mr Dicks provided a verbal update on the savings achieved due to the re-negotiation of the insurance contract (estimated at £56k for BDC and £70k for RBC).

Payroll – Reference was made to the recent problems with the payroll runs, the reasons for this and the lessons to be learned. An internal audit was currently underway.

Financial Implications

A more detailed report of the savings achieved during 2008/09 would be submitted to the next meeting of the Board.

HR Implications

Subject to the outcome of the final Serco business case, it was intended that a project plan for the harmonisation of terms and conditions would be submitted to the next meeting of the Board. In response to a Member query, Mr Dicks advised that both HR teams were working very closely together to achieve this. For the medium term wins it was agreed that the same process be adopted as was undertaken for the quick wins i.e., that the lead authority's terms and conditions would apply.

Risk Management

Mr Dicks advised that there was no change.

Worcestershire Hub

In response to a Member query, Mr Dicks clarified that the new site (Perryfields) for the Hub call centre was in Worcester. Mr Dicks also emphasised the need to ensure that Redditch and Bromsgrove Councils had input into shaping the way forward for the Hub and it was noted that Councillor Mike Webb would be attending the next project meeting.

Having considered the report and the verbal updates

It was AGREED that the progress to date be noted.

3. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

It was noted that the next meeting would be held on Monday 29th June 2009.

The Meeting closed at 8.15 p.m.