

Staff consultation summary: Property Services business case

Theme	Issue	Consultee	Consultee	Consultee	Consultee	Consultee	Consultee
		UNISON co-ordinated (A. Gregson letter 17th December 2009)	UNISON Worcester City branch Initial response to WETT Programme (received 3rd December 2009)	UNISON Redditch branch (received 21st December 2009)	GMB Worcester City branch (received 21st December 2009)	UNISON Worcestershire (received 21st December 2009)	Phil Harris, Chief Engineer, Worcestershire County Council
Staff/ union consultation process and timescale	Delay in providing Business Cases for comment	Delay in providing Business Cases for comment			Comments reflected in the UNISON co-ordinated response		
	Insufficient time for consultation on business cases	Insufficient time for consultation on business cases			Comments reflected in the UNISON co-ordinated response		
	Reluctance to engage in early discussions with unions and others contrary to statutory advice on redundancy and change management	Reluctance to engage in early discussions with unions and others contrary to statutory advice on redundancy and change management			Comments reflected in the UNISON co-ordinated response		
	Inadequate feedback about the implementation of previous shared services such as Revenues and Benefits and the Hub		Inadequate feedback about the implementation of previous shared services such as Revenues and Benefits and the Hub				
	Inconsistencies in the Business Case, regarding service improvements / financial savings						Inconsistencies in the Business Case, regarding service improvements / financial savings
Structure and capacity	Lack of detail about structures making it difficult to comment on whether service will work or deliver improvements for local communities	Lack of detail about structures making it difficult to comment on whether service will work or deliver improvements for local communities					
	Lack of clarity that staffing levels will be sufficient to deliver the competences and statutory needs/ desired services	Lack of clarity that staffing levels will be sufficient to deliver the competences and statutory needs/ desired services					
	Will all new staff required by the County Council be TUPE transfers from District partners, or, if not, where will these staff be recruited from?					Will all new staff required by the County Council be TUPE transfers from District partners, or, if not, where will these staff be recruited from?	
	The proposed timescale for implementation is unrealistic, given the present commitment of Property Services managers to existing corporate initiatives such BOLD, the Contractor Framework, the Gateway Process, iProp, the BSF programme, the Academy programme and the Wyre Forest primary schools programme						The proposed timescale for implementation is unrealistic, given the present commitment of Property Services managers to existing corporate initiatives such BOLD, the Contractor Framework, the Gateway Process, iProp, the BSF programme, the Academy programme and the Wyre Forest primary schools programme
Impact on service delivery & performance	Different service levels across participating authorities leading to inconsistent service delivery and future planning	Different service levels across participating authorities leading to inconsistent service delivery and future planning					
	There are concerns about the claim that a shared service will be better placed to meet local service needs. A shared property service may be more remote and consequently less responsive to the needs of service users and members				There are concerns about the claim that a shared service will be better placed to meet local service needs. A shared property service may be more remote and consequently less responsive to the needs of service users and members		
	In the absence of a detailed Service Level Agreement, claims regarding the benefits of transformational change and efficiency savings are difficult to substantiate				In the absence of a detailed Service Level Agreement, claims regarding the benefits of transformational change and efficiency savings are difficult to substantiate		
	Property portfolios of the districts and the county differ significantly						Property portfolios of the districts and the county differ significantly

Staff consultation summary: Property Services business case

	Property Services operates an established and successful staff training and development programme, which has helped the Division secure and retain Investor in People status since 2005 and to recruit and retain high quality staff. I note from the Revenue Budgets statement on Page 33 of the Detailed Business Case that Bromsgrove, Redditch and Malvern Hills Districts currently appear to invest nothing in staff training. This is likely to dilute the overall available budget available for training, and jeopardise Property Services' Investor in People status, unless a pro-rate injection of finance is made available for training						Property Services operates an established and successful staff training and development programme, which has helped the Division secure and retain Investor in People status since 2005 and to recruit and retain high quality staff. I note from the Revenue Budgets statement on Page 33 of the Detailed Business Case that Bromsgrove, Redditch and Malvern Hills Districts currently appear to invest nothing in staff training. This is likely to dilute the overall available budget available for training, and jeopardise Property Services' Investor in People status, unless a pro-rate injection of finance is made available for training
	The assumption that staff directly employed by the Council's can be protected by reducing the numbers of agency staff is questionable. Agency staff employed today will all have to have been fully justified. The new shared service will not necessarily change the justification for the skills of agency staff. This is a very major risk to the achievement of the predicted savings		The assumption that staff directly employed by the Council's can be protected by reducing the numbers of agency staff is questionable. Agency staff employed today will all have to have been fully justified. The new shared service will not necessarily change the justification for the skills of agency staff. This is a very major risk to the achievement of the predicted savings				
Finance, savings and investment	The ICT implementation costs (£11,000 per district, page 22) should be shown in the Financial Analysis. At present it seems reasonable to deduct this sum from the assumed savings.		The ICT implementation costs (£11,000 per district, page 22) should be shown in the Financial Analysis. At present it seems reasonable to deduct this sum from the assumed savings.				
	The combination of fixed savings and implementation being different in practice than theory means there is a very high risk that the reconfigured service will provide less than the current service.		The combination of fixed savings and implementation being different in practice than theory means there is a very high risk that the reconfigured service will provide less than the current service.				
	The finances within the Property case do not stack up – budgets do not seem to be comparable ie utilities in one Council's budget but not shown in another etc. It is unclear how the figures have been arrived at. In Worcester City Council, for example, individual service areas have maintenance budgets etc. Have these been included or not?		The finances within the Property case do not stack up – budgets do not seem to be comparable ie utilities in one Council's budget but not shown in another etc. It is unclear how the figures have been arrived at. In Worcester City Council, for example, individual service areas have maintenance budgets etc. Have these been included or not?			Comments reflected in the UNISON Worcester City Initial response	
	"Cost" of re-educating staff who would normally contact RBC staff directly			"Cost" of re-educating staff who would normally contact RBC staff directly			
	The Financial part of the business case is not clear and comparable due to the different accounting structures of the participating authorities. More detailed information has been requested				The Financial part of the business case is not clear and comparable due to the different accounting structures of the participating authorities. More detailed information has been requested		Comments reflected in the GMB response
ICT & technology	Concerns over the TUPE transfer of staff during the implementation of the new iProp ICT system						Concerns over the TUPE transfer of staff during the implementation of the new iProp ICT system

Staff consultation summary: Property Services business case

	Management time required to implement TUPE transfer and integrate staff may divert managers from other existing initiatives						Management time required to implement TUPE transfer and integrate staff may divert managers from other existing initiatives
Impact on staff terms, conditions and career prospects	Adequacy of safeguards for employees facing relocation, reductions in pay or redundancy. UNISON cannot and will not support proposals that result in compulsory redundancies	Adequacy of safeguards for employees facing relocation, reductions in pay or redundancy.		Comments reflected in the UNISON co-ordinated response	Comments reflected in the UNISON co-ordinated response	UNISON cannot and will not support proposals that result in compulsory redundancies	
	No evidence of intent to secure alternative employment across partner councils including vacancy freeze, redeployment, alternative work.	No evidence of intent to secure alternative employment across partner councils including vacancy freeze, redeployment, alternative work.					
	Honouring existing pay and grading mechanisms	Honouring existing pay and grading mechanisms		Comments reflected in the UNISON co-ordinated response			
	Proposed structure and ways of working stifle career progression resulting in difficulty in retaining staff	Proposed structure and ways of working stifle career progression resulting in difficulty in retaining staff					
	Uncertainty leading to staff actively seeking alternative employment	Uncertainty leading to staff actively seeking alternative employment					
	How many staff are at risk through this proposal now and in the longer term? Neither Property nor IA specify which leaves a cloud of uncertainty over the services	How many staff are at risk through this proposal now and in the longer term? Neither Property nor IA specify which leaves a cloud of uncertainty over the services					
	Are there any issues concerning job grades, equal pay and so on?	Are there any issues concerning job grades, equal pay and so on?					
	What are the difficulties created by increased travel time and attendance at different locations? Are there significant personnel issues which could hinder the levels of delivery of service which is anticipated in the report?	What are the difficulties created by increased travel time and attendance at different locations? Are there significant personnel issues which could hinder the levels of delivery of service which is anticipated in the report?					
	Hot-desking is not necessarily a concept as well understood or practiced across all councils - there is a severe culture shock when moving to this pattern of working and, in most cases where it has been implemented, there is little evidence of support	Hot-desking is not necessarily a concept as well understood or practiced across all councils - there is a severe culture shock when moving to this pattern of working and, in most cases where it has been implemented, there is little evidence of support	Comments reflected in the UNISON co-ordinated response				
	Are travel expenses taken into account in the Business Case? If the team moves to Worcester with consequent increased work mileage, will the mileage be changed to essential car user mileage as ite visits will increase?			Are travel expenses taken into account in the Business Case? If the team moves to Worcester with consequent increased work mileage, will the mileage be changed to essential car user mileage as ite visits will increase?			
	Appendix 6 – Financial Information (Page 32 of the Detailed Business Case) states in item 4 that "Final grade ranges are dependent on the re-evaluation of all posts by the host following TUPE transfer of all identified staff within scope". Can it be clarified whether the term "all posts" refers to all 48 incoming posts, or all 156 posts in the proposed combined Property Services structure?						Appendix 6 – Financial Information (Page 32 of the Detailed Business Case) states in item 4 that "Final grade ranges are dependent on the re-evaluation of all posts by the host following TUPE transfer of all identified staff within scope". Can it be clarified whether the term "all posts" refers to all 48 incoming posts, or all 156 posts in the proposed combined Property Services structure?

Staff consultation summary: Property Services business case

Hosting proposals	What are the practicalities of a physical move to buildings already overstaffed with poor parking provision?	What are the practicalities of a physical move to buildings already overstaffed with poor parking provision?		Comments reflected in the UNISON co-ordinated response			
Governance	No details of scrutiny or monitoring	No details of scrutiny or monitoring					
	No details of joint trade union negotiation	No details of joint trade union negotiation					
	Democratic deficit leading to lack of engagement with tax payers	Democratic deficit leading to lack of engagement with tax payers					
	The different form of governance for Property (and Internal Audit) should be more thoroughly examined, particularly key is the longevity of any SLA, how it is manufactured, monitored, and evaluated, as well as its flexibility	The different form of governance for Property (and Internal Audit) should be more thoroughly examined, particularly key is the longevity of any SLA, how it is manufactured, monitored, and evaluated, as well as its flexibility	Comments reflected in the UNISON co-ordinated response			Comments reflected in the UNISON co-ordinated response	
	The business case does not explore the drawbacks and merits of either SLA or Joint Committee.		The business case does not explore the drawbacks and merits of either SLA or Joint Committee.				
	Is the SLA a "take it or leave it" offer from the County?			Is the SLA a "take it or leave it" offer from the County?			
	What happens after year 3 of the SLA?				What happens after year 3 of the SLA?		
Equalities	No evidence of equality impact assessment. Request a copy as a matter of urgency	No evidence of equality impact assessment				No evidence of equality impact assessment . Request a copy as a matter of urgency	
Issues specific to individual authorities	A number of points specific to Redditch BC's local circumstances: its attitude to local companies as set out in the corporate plan; existing contracts; existing budgets / DSO costs; buildings included / excluded; on-site caretakers; its green credentials; "Cost" of re-educating staff who would normally contact RBC staff directly;			A number of points specific to Redditch BC's local circumstances: its attitude to local companies as set out in the corporate plan; existing contracts; existing budgets / DSO costs; buildings included / excluded; on-site caretakers; its green credentials; "Cost" of re-educating staff who would normally contact RBC staff directly;			
	A number of points specific to Worcester City's local circumstances: City / County portfolio differences; Hopmarket Trustees issue; relationship to other Shared Service proposals; "SLA = outsourcing"				A number of points specific to Worcester City's local circumstances: City / County portfolio differences; Hopmarket Trustees issue; relationship to other Shared Service proposals; "SLA = outsourcing"		
	What is the contractual position for the County Council, should there be disagreements between authorities over the course of the shared service? Is there suitable protection in place for the County's existing service?					What is the contractual position for the County Council, should there be disagreements between authorities over the course of the shared service? Is there suitable protection in place for the County's existing service?	