

**BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL AND REDDITCH BOROUGH COUNCIL**

**SHARED SERVICES BOARD**

**24<sup>th</sup> June 2010 at 5.30pm**

**COMMITTEE ROOM 2, REDDITCH TOWN HALL**

**Notes**

**Present**

Cllr Gandy (in the Chair) and Cllrs Braley and Hartnett (Redditch BC)  
Cllrs Hollingworth, Colella, Denaro and Peters (Bromsgrove DC).

**Observers**

Cllrs Banks and Pearce (Redditch BC).

**Officers**

Kevin Dicks, Sue Hanley and Steve Skinner (Notes).

**1. Apologies**

There were no apologies for absence.

**CONFIDENTIAL**

**2. Minutes**

The minutes of the previous meeting of the Board were confirmed as a correct record.

**3. Matters Arising**

Brief updates were provided in relation to the Target setting and Audit Commission items.

On the latter, Mr Dicks advised that the legal framework agreed between Redditch and Bromsgrove Councils was more than most other Councils currently had in place and that no other authorities had established fall-back positions at the current time.

#### **4. Shared Services Progress Report**

Mr Dicks introduced this item and responded to matters raised by Members:

i) Single Management Team

The final appointee, Amanda de Warr, new Head of Customer Services, was arriving in early July from Wychavon DC.

Mr Dicks advised that the Team was working very well together and gave him confidence that they would become a very effective Management Team serving the 2 Councils.

ii) Elections Team

Experience at the General & Local Elections had been that the new arrangements had essentially worked well. The main issue had been the operation of the new shared computer system.

In terms of quantifying improvements in registration and/or turnout, it was agreed that it was impossible to gauge this year whether it was new activities, or the General Election, which had increased numbers. Means would be sought to measure improvements wherever possible.

iii) Community Safety

This continued to operate satisfactorily.

iv) ICT

This arrangement was formally going live on 1<sup>st</sup> August. The Team Manager post was out for recruitment as neither previous Manager had been successful at recruitment for the vacant post. In the interim, Mark Hanwell, was acting up in place of the Manager.

Mr Dicks advised that severance costs would be brought to Members in a future report.

v) Lifeline

Mrs Hanley advised that, for a range of reasons, the Lifeline Shared Services implementation had been a complicated one, but that it had ultimately been successful.

TUPE transfer of staff had taken place on 4<sup>th</sup> of January. There had been no need for any compulsory redundancies, but eight staff had requested and been granted Voluntary Compulsory Redundancy. The Bromsgrove Control Centre had closed in June, and there had been full continuity since from Redditch premises.

Members congratulated Officers on what had appeared to them to be a seamless change. Once again, a summary of the final costs would be submitted to Members in a later report.

vi) Payroll

Members noted that Wyre Forest DC had made an approach regarding Redditch and Bromsgrove running their Payroll too.

vii) Procurement

There was little more to report at the current time (later item below refers).

viii) Climate Change

There was little more to report at the current time. At present it was felt that given the different positions of both Councils that separate Advisory Panels were retained.

ix) Economic Development

John Staniland was the lead Director for this at RBC and the proposal had gained RBC Council approval.

Members reaffirmed their intention and the need to maintain local 'theme groups' in each Council (called 'Economic Advisory Panel' in Redditch).

x) Joint IRP (Independent Remuneration Panel)

It was noted that Bromsgrove had already agreed the proposal for a Joint IRP across County. Redditch would be considering this on 28<sup>th</sup> June.

xi) Regulatory - WETT

These services had transferred and staff had been TUPE'd across on 1<sup>st</sup> June. A Head of Service, Steve Jordan, had been appointed. The Joint Committee had been appointed, comprising two members from each participating authority. Legal agreements had been signed before the launch. Members noted the significant inputs from key Officers to make this happen on time.

Work had now begun on 'Systems Thinking' and the 'Transformation' approach. All Councils were currently on different systems, so one solution would be the procurement of a single computer system.

xii) Audit

Audit Services had been transferred to Worcester City Council and the Manager's post was out to national advert.

xiii) Property Services

Staff TUPE transferred to Worcestershire County Council on 1<sup>st</sup> June.

xiv) WETT – Where Next?

Officers advised that further developments were currently on hold while the other projects were being implemented. It might perhaps be necessary to consider all services over time, but Mr Dicks queried whether Members had anything to propose now?

Members considered: Waste where the split between collection and disposal seemed arbitrary at present.

Members also queried Highways / Highways maintenance. There was general agreement there might be some scope in that area.

Members wondered whether Youth Services might be worth considering. Members suggested that this might be devolved down, rather than shared on the basis that District-level Members might be in a better position to target the available resources where they were needed.

xv) Section 6 - Sharing of Costs

Members noted the Appendices which detailed financial performance. Mr Dicks advised that the costs shown were in-year, not cumulative, and asked that any detailed questions be presented to Jayne Pickering for response.

xvi) Human Resources

Officers reported that there was still a very good relationship with Trade Unions. Redditch and Bromsgrove branches of Unison had agreed to merge.

Work on the harmonisation of employee terms and conditions continued.

**It was AGREED that**

**the report and the oral updates to the report be noted.**

**5. Shared Services and Transformation / Programme**

With reference to the reports and appendices before the Board, Mr Dicks sought endorsement of the proposed Shared Services / Transformation Programme. He advised that, at the end of the programme for those services that were planned to be taken through the Transformation process, that shared service structures would be reviewed following the transformation.

Mrs Hanley emphasised the need to avoid staff going through too many different processes re changed structures. But suggested that, as Environmental Services were very prominent and frontline, some services did need to be realigned to get them fit for the transformation process. Some further proposals would therefore be brought forward in the interim.

Members agreed there might be some 'quick wins' which might be considered, for example, rationalisation of waste collection in areas where Redditch was closer. Mr Dicks confirmed that some of these opportunities were already being taken.

Some Members considered they needed to better understand 'Transformational Thinking' / 'Systems Thinking' and urged that a seminar be set up to explain these processes further.

Mr Dicks added that these processes did not start till September, and he advised of staff consultation processes, particularly with a view to identifying any particular pinch points.

He pointed out that the current proposals were only a start, and that the situation would be reviewed again after 12 months.

**It was RECOMMENDED that**

- 1) the use of the WMIEP (West Midlands Improvement and Efficiency Partnership) Systems Thinking change methodology for the transformation of service areas be approved; and**
- 2) the proposed programme of service areas to be considered for Shared Services / Transformation between the two**

**Councils, as detailed in the Appendix to the report, be approved.**

**6. Procurement**

Mr Dicks asked the Board to consider whether Procurement should be pursued as a shared service? He suggested that this might be rolled out across Worcestershire, but also possibly draw in a Warwickshire authority which had expressed interest. The aim was to improve resilience and the available skill set.

Whilst supporting the principle, some Members expressed a degree of concern that this might make the service too big & remote.

It was suggested that there should perhaps be a penalty to authorities who chose to join in late, which Officers supported.

Mr Dicks advised that a couple of districts might not join in and that, at this stage, he was seeking endorsement of broad principles only.

A further report would be brought to Members in due time.

**It was RECOMMENDED that**

**the proposal be agreed in principle.**

**14. Other Business**

There was no other business for this meeting.

**15. Next Meeting**

**It was AGREED that**

**the next meeting be held on Thursday 19<sup>th</sup> August 2010, commencing at 5.30 pm, at Redditch Town Hall (Committee Room 3).**

*(Cllr Hollingworth offered his apologies in advance).*

**The meeting commenced at 5.30 pm and closed at 7.05 pm.**