



www.redditchbc.gov.uk

# Overview and Scrutiny Committee

---

Wednesday, 4 February  
2009

## MINUTES

### Present:

Councillor Phil Mould (Chair), Councillor David Smith (Vice-Chair) and Councillors K Banks, M Chalk, R King, W Norton, D Taylor and D Thomas

### Co-opted Members

T Buckley and R Colebrook (UNISON)

### Also Present:

Mr J Jordan, (Worcestershire County Council) Councillor M King (Wychavon District Council) and Councillor B Quinney

### Officers:

S Hanley, E Storer and C Wilson

### Committee Services Officer:

J Bayley and H Saunders

## 155. SHARED SERVICES BOARD AND JOINT WORKING

The Chair welcomed relevant Officers and the co-opted members of the Committee, representatives of UNISON. He invited Members to ask questions about the Shared Services arrangements and to consider the content of a presentation that had been prepared by Officers. (Appendix A).

Officers informed Members that the Shared Services Board was not a decision making body. The Board considered information about the potential for sharing specific services and reported recommendations to the respective Executive Committees at Redditch Borough Council and Bromsgrove District Council. Throughout the shared services process Council staff and union representatives had been consulted. Officers explained that both Councils had agreed to proceed on the business cases for sharing

.....  
Chair

# Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Wednesday, 4 February 2009

---

two specific services and had reached a stage where there was a requirement for a formal period of consultation.

The UNISON representatives explained that they were keen to work closely with managers as part of the shared services process. They believed that as Union representatives they had a responsibility to ensure that all decisions were fair, both for their members and for other staff affected by the changes, and that there would be effective outcomes for both local authorities. The relevant policies at the two Councils would be assessed as a matter of course, though at this stage they did not feel that it would be appropriate to review every minute detail. They concluded by noting that they were pleased about the degree to which they had already been engaged in the process and were satisfied that they would continue to be consulted in a satisfactory manner as the shared services process moved forward.

The Chair explained that some Members had had concerns about the shared services agenda, particularly in relation to the implications for Human Resources arrangements. He noted that the two Councils had different Human Resources practices and conditions of service and it was felt some questions remained unanswered about how these differences would be addressed and what impact this might have on relevant staff.

Officers presented further information about the Shared Services arrangements that provided answers to many of these questions. They explained that no shared services arrangements would proceed without suitable business cases. These business cases were focusing not on making savings but rather on the extent to which service quality would be enhanced and the long-term sustainability of suggested shared service arrangements.

Officers explained that as part of the shared services agenda one of the main Human Resources considerations was regarding the impact upon individual staff. Wherever possible the aim would be to ensure that staff adopted the host Council's working arrangements. However, this would be discounted where any such change might have a detrimental impact on the individual concerned.

Members discussed the implications of the shared services agenda for a wider context of harmonising terms and conditions throughout the Council. Officers explained that the Board had not been asked to review the issue of harmonisation of terms and conditions across

# Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Wednesday, 4 February 2009

---

the whole of the Council. However, the Board had recognised that this was an issue that would need to be addressed in the long term.

Members noted that issues such as sickness benefits had been omitted from the presentation and they questioned whether these would be addressed as part of the process. Officers explained that these issues would be addressed by both Councils. However, it was not anticipated that the arrangements for sickness absence would be a problem as part of the negotiations because both Councils had based their sickness absence policies on national schemes.

Members noted that they were satisfied with the information that had been reported during the meeting and they thanked relevant Officers and the UNISON representatives for their contributions. They requested that regular updates on progress with the shared services process be received at following meetings of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

## **RESOLVED that**

- 1) Officers be requested to provide updates on progress with the shared services agenda at following meetings of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee; and**
- 2) subject to the comments contained in the preamble above, the report be noted.**

The Meeting commenced at 7.00 pm  
and closed at 8.30 pm



# Shared Services

An overview of the process

# Short Term Process

- TUPE – Transfer of Undertakings (Protection of Employment)
- Transfer of Services

# What this means

- Terms and Conditions of Host Authority
- No less favourable terms and conditions
- Employee cannot suffer any detriment
- Employees working alongside each other with different terms and conditions

# Long Term Process

Potential to:-

- Harmonise terms and conditions
- Employment Law process
- Management/member decision
- Negotiate with Trade Unions
- Consult with Employees
- Individual Council decisions – RBC & BDC



# The Risks

- Low risk at the time of transfer and shortly afterwards
- Longer term if harmonisation of terms and conditions does not take place greater risk due to Equal Pay legislation
- And dissatisfied employees

# Risk Mitigation Controls

- Both business cases – determined new structure/posts to be recruited to.
- Full Staff and T.U. consultation
- External employment advice commissioned

# Service Level Agreement

## Areas to be agreed

- Shared redundancy costs
- Shared pension costs
- Break clauses– need to consider options, i.e. reversal of TUPE process

