

REPORT TO THE EXECUTIVE		Report No. 17
Date of Meeting	17 January 2008	
Title of Report	Unitary Transition Programme Update	
Portfolio	Policy	
Link to Corporate Priorities	Links to new Corporate Goal: Transition to New Unitary Authority	
Key Decision	No	
Executive Workplan Ref	B380	
Public Report	Yes	

Summary of Report

To update the Executive of the work of the newly formed Transition Team and to provide options as to how members can be updated of its progress and be informed of developments across the One Council for Wiltshire Unitary Programme.

Officer Recommendations

That the Executive set up an Executive Transition Working Group that will oversee the Council's arrangements for the transition to the new authority.

Other than those implications agreed with the relevant Officers and referred to below, there are no other implications associated with this report.

Financial Implications	Legal Implications	Community & Environmental Implications	Human Resources Implications	Equality & Diversity Implications
None	None	None	Yes	None

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1. Introduction

- 1.1 This report provides an update of the work of the newly formed Transition Team and provides options as to how members can be updated of its progress and be informed of developments across the One Council for Wiltshire Unitary Programme.

2. Options and Options Appraisal

- 2.1 Option 1: The Executive set up an Executive Transition Working Group that will oversee the Council's arrangements for the transition to the new authority.
- 2.2 Option 2: The Executive decide on alternative arrangements to oversee the Council's transition to the new authority.

3. Background Information

- 3.1 The One Council for Wiltshire (1C4W) programme was set up in September 2007 to manage the transition of the 5 Wiltshire Councils and their services into a new authority. The programme structure includes:
- Implementation Executive
 - Implementation Board
 - 4 Workstreams:
 - Community Leadership and Governance
 - Frontline Services
 - Resources
 - Business Management Programme
 - Specific Projects that fall under Workstream areas
- 3.2 In response to the 1C4W programme, the Council has set up a Transition Team that will act as a point of contact for staff, members and partners. The Transition Team comprises the Head of Policy and Performance, Head of Human Resources, NWDC Workstream Leads, a Communications Lead, and a Transition Programme Administrator.
- 3.3 The Transition Team aims to:
- Ensure that the Council plays a full role in shaping the services of the new unitary authority
 - Ensure 'business as usual' for service delivery to the public and a smooth handover to the new unitary authority
 - Ensure that Council staff are supported throughout the transition process and their interests pursued wherever possible
 - Support the interests of NWDC Members through the transition
- 3.4 The Transition Team is now operational and will become fully functional as the 1C4W programme starts in earnest over the next month.

4. Current Member Arrangements

- 4.1 There are a number of Member groups that have been, or are in the process of being, set up to direct, oversee and influence the 1C4W programme:

4.2 Implementation Executive

- 4.2.1 Following receipt of the draft Implementation Order, an Implementation Executive was formed to direct and oversee the 1C4W programme. The Implementation Executive is to be the committee of the executive of the transitional authority and will be wound up 4 days after the election for Wiltshire Council. The Implementation Executive will be responsible for the 1C4W programme and any associated budgets and plans required to deliver it.
- 4.2.2 The Implementation Executive comprises 9 County Councillors (normally Cabinet Members), including the Leader who is Chair, and 2 representative from each of the 4 districts (normally the Leader and Deputy Leader).
- 4.2.3 The Executive met informally on 28 November 2007, where it received a programme update and discussed its terms of reference, the forward plan, Community Area Boards, and Member Reference Groups.

4.3 Joint Overview & Scrutiny Transition Board

- 4.3.1 The Joint Overview & Scrutiny Transition Board is being set up to formally hold the Implementation Executive to public account for its decisions and plans and will have the ability to appoint small task groups and individual members to scrutinise and input to transition work streams and projects based on member interests.
- 4.3.2 The Joint O&S Board will help shape proposals for O&S arrangements for the new council and the officer group will also provide advice to the Democratic Services Project under the Resources Work Stream. A workplan is currently in development.
- 4.3.3 The Board comprises 5 County Councillors and 4 District Councillors, including the Chair of North Wiltshire DC's Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

4.4 Member Reference Groups

- 4.4.1 External Member Reference Groups have been proposed for the 1C4W workstreams to enable Members to get involved in shaping services. This is a different role than that envisaged for scrutiny in that the reference groups will steer the development of the proposals coming out of the workstreams.
- 4.4.2 Whilst the shape and function of these Reference Groups are still to be finalised, they may present opportunities for portfolio holders to contribute in areas of expertise by helping to shape services for the new authority.

4.5 Overview & Scrutiny Rural Unitary Task Group (NWDC)

- 4.5.1 A North Wiltshire Scrutiny Task Group has been set up to take account of the experience of existing unitary local authorities which serve large, rural areas. The terms of reference are given at appendix 1.
- 4.5.2 Overview and Scrutiny Committee will be reviewing the Rural Unitary Task Group's terms of reference and workplan to take into account the work of the Joint Overview & Scrutiny Transition Board.

5. Future Member and Reporting Arrangements

- 5.1 The Chief Executive recently outlined a transitional structure for the Council that includes an Executive Transition Working Group. It is envisaged that this group would act in an advisory and monitoring role, overseeing the Council's arrangements for the transition to the new authority and acting as a conduit to the Executive, raising any issues or developments that relate to transition.
- 5.2 It is suggested that representation from the Council's Transition Team on this Group would be beneficial to enhance lines of communication and avoid duplication of effort. It is envisaged that this Group would report to Executive on a regular basis, providing progress updates on the 1C4W programme and details of any related significant issues that impact on Council business.
- 5.3 This Group will offer Members a simple means of receiving top-level information relating to the transition and will allow matters of strategic importance to be referred to the Executive
- 5.4 It is, therefore, recommended that the Executive set up an Executive Transition Working Group that will oversee the Council's arrangements for the transition to the new authority.

6. HR Implications

- 6.1 Member and officer time will be required to operate an Executive Transition Working Group, although a single reference group will avoid duplication of effort.

7. Risk Analysis

- 7.1 Without an Executive Transition Working Group there is a risk that significant strategic issues relating to the transition programme are not reported to the Executive. There is also a risk that, without a coordinated Member link to the transition, efforts are duplicated and resources are not used most effectively.

Appendices:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">1. Rural Unitary Task Group Terms of Reference.
Background Documents Used in the Preparation of this Report:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">None

Previous Decisions Connected with this Report

Report	Committee & Date	Minute Reference
<ul style="list-style-type: none">None		