

**KENNET DISTRICT COUNCIL
CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S GROUP**

**Overview & Scrutiny Management Board
10th July 2007**

Building Control Partnership Working policy Scrutiny

Report by Ted Howles, Planning Services Manager

1.0 Purpose of the Report

- 1.1 To inform Overview and Scrutiny Management Board of progress made on this project and to enable them to scrutinise the business case to join the district council building control services into a single unit as requested by the Wiltshire Customer First Partnership Board.

The project aligns with the councils priorities by:

- putting customers first.
- It also is an action listed in the building control service delivery plan.

The project fits with the supporting principles of:

- sound financial management;
- valued and supported staff;
- a well planned and focussed approach;
- efficient and effective service delivery.

2.0 Financial, Staffing, Legal & Risk Implications

2.1 Finance implications

The financial case has been prepared by KPMG and is set out in section 5 of the business case.

The case concludes that:

- Using realistic projections, the joint unit will cost around £19k less to deliver building control services across Wiltshire in Year 1 than the current position with four authorities;
- The saving compared with the current position is likely to increase in Years 2 and 3. A realistic estimate is that there will be a net benefit of £175k over three years;
- The sensitivity analysis suggests that over three years the benefits could be as high as £876k (optimistic scenario), but there could be a cost of £271k (pessimistic scenario);
- Potential implementation costs could be up to £112k, which shows a maximum payback period of three years.

The Wiltshire Customer First Partnership Board has asked for further work to be carried out to establish the cost of providing support services to the new building control unit.

2.2 Staffing implications

The staffing implications are set out in the business case under Section 4 of the business case.

- It is proposed that 37 of the existing 44 posts will transfer into the new organisation, savings being made in within the management and administrative tiers. Two additional Assistant Surveyor posts will be facilitated
- It is proposed to transfer the staff to a host authority under the TUPE transfer rules, the implications of which are explored within Section 4 of the business case.

2.3 Legal implications

The authorities are able under the Local Government Acts 1972 and 2000 to create joint working structures. Any employment law issues will be considered as part of the implementation plan.

2.4 Risk management Implications

A detailed risk register is provided in section 7 of the business case.

3.0 Background

- Building Control was identified by the Wiltshire Customer First Partnership as a service that might be improved by partnership working.
- Building Control Managers from Kennet DC, North Wiltshire DC, Salisbury DC and West Wiltshire DC have carried out extensive work since April 2006 to identify and investigate various options for the delivery of the service.
- KPMG were engaged as consultants to assess the financial aspect of the case.

4.0 Key issues

- The building control service is subject to increasing pressures from both internal and external drivers of change within the building control sector, and wider local government environments. This has created a challenge to the viability of the current strategies used, and systems adopted.
- The building control managers hold the collective view that the pressure for change and its impact on key service resources and capabilities is overwhelming. It is considered that if strategic actions are not taken in the short-medium term, the authorities may find

themselves in a position of service failure, additional expenditure, and reduced revenues.

- The business case outlines a pro-active response to these drivers, setting out why a new structural form is required, and how this may safeguard strategic capability whilst allowing the development of service which is resilient to future strategic challenges
- The appointment of the Director will be key to the successful implementation of the strategic plan.

5.0 Next Steps

- Carry out further work as required by Wiltshire Customer First Partnership Board.
- Prepare a detailed implementation plan.
- Seek approval from each partner authority to move to implementation stage.

6.0 IT IS THEREFORE RECOMMENDED THAT; the Board

- I. Recommends that the executive approves in principle the establishment of joint working in Building Control.
- II. Endorses the Joint Working in Building Control business case,
- III. A further report is prepared when the detailed information is completed and approved by the Wiltshire Customer Partnership Board.

Report Author:
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