JOINT OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY TRANSITION BOARD

Notes of the Informal meeting held in North Wiltshire District Council - 22 February 2008

In Attendance

Members	Substitutes
Cllr Jeff Osborn WCC	Cllr Chris Humphries WCC
Cllr Tony Molland WCC	Cllr Roy While WCC
Cllr Robert Hall WCC	Cllr Mollie Groom WCC
Cllr Judy Rooke WCC	Cllr Paula Winchcombe
Cllr Ricky Rogers WCC	Cllr Ray Parsons KDC
Cllr Clyde Hoddinott KDC	Cllr Christine Reid NWDC
Cllr Chris Caswill NWDC	Cllr Michael Hewitt SDC
Cllr Keith Humphries WWDC	

Also in attendance:
Mr Paul Kelly, Mr Ceri Williams, Mr Ian Cook, Mr Tim Gregory,
Mr Richard Woodroofe, Ms Jan Collins - WCC
Mr Steve Milton - SDC
Mr Paul Mountford – WWDC
Mr James Whittleton, Mrs Marie Todd, Mr Pete Barnett - NWDC

8.   Chairman for the meeting

Mr Jeff Osborn was elected Chairman.

9.   Notes of Previous Meeting

Mr Mike Hewitt had replaced Mrs Murial Tomlinson as a SDC Board member.

10.   Risk Management during the Transition to One Council

Ian Cook, Programme Office Manager provided the members with an overview of risk during transition

The Joint Implementation Team (JIT) and Workstreams had adopted a clear and consistent approach to risk management. It was hoped that by the March meeting of the Implementation Executive the final template for detailing the

project's approach to risk management would be approved. By the end of February the register detailing all project risks would be completed. The register would include details of the risk owner, who was expected to produce a fortnightly report to the programme office providing the status of their risk.

During discussions members asked for confirmation about the traffic light approach taken to record risk. It was also noted that a key responsibility of the five task groups would be to monitor their project's risk, with JOSTB having the ability to follow key developments via the main IE Progress Report. The Chairman encouraged members to pursue individual interest areas and to alert the Board to issues of concern.

Actions

a) To continue to scrutinise risk through the JOSTB meetings and the Board's five task groups.
b) Cllr Chris Caswell was asked to take a leading interest for scrutiny of risk management during transition.

11. Human Resources during the Transition to One Council

Richard Woodroofe, Assistant Director Pay Reform, briefed the members on the key Human Resource issues faced during transition. This was also a cross-cutting project under the transition programme.

A new recruitment protocol had been agreed in August-September 2007. Vacant posts would now be offered as a secondment until vesting day, with staff from the 5 councils invited to apply. Only essential service dependant jobs would be recruited externally. Secondments not attracting applications would be advertised as temporary jobs until April 09. This had proven successful with already 14 appointments made using the new policy; it had also reduced the risk of post April 2009 redundancies.

All indications from government had suggested that staff on vesting day would commence work for the new council on their existing salaries, although actual staffing regulations were still awaited.

Communication to staff had taken place through e-mail, newsletters and by face to face. A survey of staff from the 5 councils was scheduled for circulation in approximately 3 months time.

Agreed

a) To thank the Assistant Director for the briefing.
b) To encourage the survey of staff to take place as soon as possible.

12.   ICT during the Transition to One Council

Tim Gregory Head of ICT introduced the Board to the ICT issues faced during transition, which would be managed as a cross-cutting project under the programme.

The immediate task was to establish a wide area network to include the districts by the end of the calendar year. Other projects included e-mail and a second centre for data management. The available timescale would mean that the majority of current systems would be retained post April 2009, with a longer term aim to explore replacements in the early years of the new council.

Members raised concern that £2.5 million budget for transition was insufficient and whether this could lead to a patching up of the existing infrastructure. The Board also discussed the future level of support for members and the development of the web site.

Actions

a)   To thank Tm Gregory for the briefing
b)   Cllr Keith Humphries to take individual lead responsibility for scrutiny of ICT during transition.

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13. Update on Joint Overview and Scrutiny Transition Board Work Programme and Resources

The Board considered a briefing note prepared by Steve Milton detailing the budget and resource availability for transitional scrutiny, a draft work programme and proposed terms of reference for each task group agreed at the last meeting.

It was anticipated that the task group reviews would run for approximately 3 months, with the scope around the terms of reference agreed by the members at the first meeting. The Board recognised the urgency for the task groups to commence work as soon as possible.

The Board also discussed the importance of informing the Implementation Executive of the work of JOSTB.

Agreed

a)   Using the approved terms of reference the 5 proposed task groups would commence work immediately on finalisation of membership and officer support.
b)   The officer group to re-circulate to JOSTB the report with updated task group membership and named officer support

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c)	The Task Group Protocol to be rewritten to reflect the JOSTB decision to allow individual authorities to determine named substitutes for task group meetings if necessary.
d)	Scrutiny officers to produce an update for the next meeting of the IE summarising the key work areas of the JOSTB and its task groups.

14. Towards One Council Progress Report

Tim Gregory provided the Board with a brief overview of the Progress Report considered at the last IE on 13 February, focusing on the areas that the JOSBT had identified for task group scrutiny. The members were informed of the lead officers for each area and each project's current position in terms of delivery.

15. Next meeting

28 March 2008 10.00 am at West Wiltshire District Council.

Items requested:

a) Transition budget monitoring
b) Realising the benefits
c) LAA – member engagement

(Duration of Meeting: 10.00am – 12.15pm)

The Officer who has produced these minutes is Ceri Williams, Democratic & Members' Services, Wiltshire County Council direct line: (01225) 713079.