



JOINT OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY TRANSITION BOARD

Notes of the first formal meeting held in West Wiltshire District Council **- 28 March 2008**

In Attendance

Members
Cllr Tony Molland WCC
Cllr Chris Caswill NWDC
Cllr Mike Hewitt SDC
Cllr Clyde Hoddinott KDC
Cllr Chris Humphries WCC
Cllr Keith Humphries WWDC
Cllr Jeff Osborn WCC
Cllr Roy While WCC

Also in attendance:

Cllr Julian Johnson WCC

Paul Kelly, Ceri Williams, Sandra Schofield - WCC

Steve Milton - SDC

Marie Lindsay – WWDC

Karen Scott - KDC

1. Apologies and Membership

Apologies were received from Mr Ricky Rogers, Mrs Mollie Groom, Brigadier Robert Hall and Mr Ian West.

Mrs Judy Rooke had resigned from the Board to be replaced by Mr Ian West. Mr West's position as a substitute would be taken by Mr Ross Henning.

2. Election of Chairman

Mr Tony Molland was elected Chairman.

3. Election of Vice-Chairman

The Vice-Chairman would be appointed at the April meeting.

4. Notes of the Previous Meeting – 22 February

The notes of the previous meeting were received.

5. Terms of Reference

Agreed

To approve the terms of reference discussed at the informal meeting on 14 December, 2007.

6. Operational Protocols

Agreed

To approve the operational protocols discussed at the informal meeting on 14 December, 2007.

7. (1) Finance: Transition Costs and savings (2) Revenue Budget Baseline

The JOSTB considered 2 reports from the Chief Financial Officer prepared for the IE on 13 February and 19 March.

The IE had now delegated authority to the Director of the One Council Programme management of the £17.37m budget for transition.

The 2nd report presented a consolidated position for the revenue budget for 2007-08 of all the councils. The 2008-09 figures would be finalised by April. Officers were undertaking desktop exercises to develop the Financial Plan for 2009-10. Workshops were being held in the summer with service heads with an aim to report to the IE in November.

Other issues discussed included:

- The impact of major projects such as Park and Ride on the revenue budget baseline.
- The level of guidance provided by government to support this budget process.
- The impact on council tax levies.

Agreed

1. To thank the Chief Finance Officer for the briefing
2. To circulate to the JOSTB the Chief Financial Officer's report on council tax equalisation.

8. Organisation and Structure of the New Council

The JOSTB considered a report taken by the Chief Executive WCC to the IE on March 17. The Chief Executive intended to submit a second report

to the IE on 15 April with options and recommendations for a departmental structure for the new council.

The Chairman invited comments and observations from the Board. These would be put forward to the Chief Executive in advance of the 2nd report being published.

Members discussed paragraphs 16 & 17 which referred to the role of scrutiny within the new authority. The Chairman highlighted that scrutiny would need to consider the final proposals for community boards prior to determining its own structure.

Concerns were raised that the JOSTB was unable to provide appropriate challenge to the proposals, meeting after the IE with no call-in powers. The WCC Scrutiny Manager explained that the Chief Executive had offered to meet the Board to discuss the proposals, although prior commitments necessitated a new meeting date.

The detail of paragraph 30 was discussed, with Board Members voicing concern that without senior enough management representation at a local level the Community Boards would risk being unsuccessful.

Agreed

To submit a written response from the JOSTB to the Chief Executive's report.

9. Task Groups

The members noted the progress made by the four task groups. Concern was raised in response to the Development Control Task Group's inclusion of Spatial Planning on its work programme. The Board was concerned that this would be too significant a work area.

Agreed

To request that the Development Control Task group does not consider Spatial Planning within the review at this stage.

10. Members Interests

Cllr Chris Caswill briefed the Board on his work scrutinising transitional risk. A meeting had taken place with Ian Cook, following which ICT and Staffing were flagged as the highest risks. Councillor Caswill had suggested that our risk register should be circulated to the rural unitary authority of East Riding Council for comment.

Cllr Keith Humphries lead member for ICT had had secured a large amount of project literature but had found it difficult to arrange a date with the relevant officers leading on this cross cutting theme.

Agreed

- 1. To receive a monthly update on risk developments from Cllr Chris Caswill.**
- 2. WCC Officers to liaise with the Assistant Director for Procurement and ICT to arrange a face to face meeting for Cllr Keith Humphries.**

11. Promotion and Communication of the Work of Transition Scrutiny

Karen Scott, Corporate Services Manager, KDC updated the Board on promoting transitional scrutiny arrangements. Discussion took place in relation to internal and external communications, with the quality of the website and volume of newsletters circulated to members some of the key issues highlighted.

Agreed

- 1. Karen Scott agreed to lead on publicising the work of the JOSTB and to issue any relevant press releases**
- 2. District and County Officers will be responsible for maintaining communication channels with their respective members**
- 3. To invite an officer from the web team to discuss the development of the web site**

12. Towards One Council Progress Report

The JOSTB considered the latest transition progress report for the IE meeting on 19 March.

Agreed

To the request from the Chairman of the IE and the Programme Director to ask the Development Control Task Group to take an overview/policy development role.

13. Workstream Project Initiation Documents

The board considered PIDs for:

a) Frontline services b) Resources and c) Community Leadership and Governance.

Agreed

To include in the Board's response to the Chief Executive a concern about the level of connectivity between the PIDs and the Organisation Structure proposals.

14. Next meeting – Friday 25 April 2008 10.30 at Wiltshire County Council Offices

Agreed to include the following items on the agenda as appropriate:

- a) Benefits Realisation Plan
- b) Local Area Agreement
- c) Chief Executive's 2nd report – Organisation and Structure of the New Council
- d) How to deal with scrutiny reports produced by individual authorities
- e) Minutes from the IE (standard future item)

(Duration of Meeting: 10.30am – 12.20pm)

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