

AGENDA ITEM NO. 4(B) iii

Draft Minute from JIT 8 July 2008

JIT discussed Delwyn Burbidge's paper and comments on it by WWDC and SDC. Points made:

- Transitional arrangements must:
 - Recognise the continuing accountability of District Councillors (notably, the Leaders) for the services for which their Councils are responsible until 31 March 2009. This includes routine operations, complaints and requests by constituents, and unforeseen events. District Councillors will want to ensure that services are managed effectively and maintain their performance until April 2009.
 - Enable the five councils to manage the inevitable turbulence of staff leaving or changing jobs, use of agency staff (until April and possibly beyond).
 - Enable chief Executives and their staff to complete and/or hand over to the new Council significant projects under way in the Districts (e.g. Parishing of Salisbury).
 - Facilitate sharing of resources to fill gaps and build capacity.
 - Acknowledge that the role of the District Chief Executive will diminish (especially strategic responsibilities) but the need for a Head of Paid Service will remain until 31 March.
 - Establish robust procedures and not rely simply on informal arrangements.
 - Enable proper planning of services for the new Council so that arrangements are effectively in place by 1 January 2009.

JIT agreed that:

- It would be helpful to share current work plans for Cabinet/Scrutiny to March 2009, plus current schedules of meetings.
- Views may differ among Councils. Some exploratory and informal discussions will be helpful before this is presented formally to the I.E. for a decision.
- One key issue concerns the date when appointments to the new Council become effective. To date, appointments have been offered with effect from 1 April 2009. They could take effect earlier, e.g. 1 January 2009. In that case, District Councils would need some assurance that their responsibilities would not be prejudiced as a result. (There is an analogy here with the criteria for establishing County teams early, on which I.E. will receive a progress report in August/September).
- Arrangements for appointments should be equitable and fair for the staff concerned. They would be in different situations – some would face an increase in salary but others might not. Many will in effect be

holding two sets of responsibilities during the transition – current duties plus preparation for new ones.

Summing up, the Chairman said that:

- The interests and responsibilities of District Leaders and other Councillors must be acknowledged in any transitional arrangements.
- The new extended Management Team (Corporate and Service Directors and probably the next tier also) must be in place and operational by 1 January 2009.
- In his view the best option would be for the new Management Team to take responsibility for managing District services (as well as County ones) from that date. This would involve preparing for 1 April and managing the operation until then.
- This would mean that appointments to the new Council would take effect on or before 1 January and would be accompanied by formal agreements with the Leaders and Chief Executives of the four Districts for the operation of services until 31 March. This agreement would be similar to that for a service which is merged earlier, and reports on that topic and this one might usefully be taken to the same meeting of the I.E., in August or September.