

JOINT OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY TRANSITION BOARD

Parking Services

Interim Report

Purpose of report

1. To update the JOSTB on the approach of the Front Line Workstream to manage the transition programme for the four district authorities parking services departments up to 1 April 2009.

Work to Date

2. The Front Line Workstream Board (FLS) has developed a Programme Initiation Document that sets the scene for the work that must go on up to 1 April 2009 and beyond to achieve the objectives set out in "We're ready.." and "Next steps..".
3. The Parking Project, headed by a project manager, is a sub project of the FLS work stream. It has been established to prove leadership and accountability to ensure a smooth transition of the separate Parking Services departments currently run within the four district councils into the one integrated Parking Services department required for Wiltshire Council.
4. A Parking Practitioners Group is assisting the Project Manager to ensure members of the relevant departments are involved in the transition and transformation of the service. The group meets on a monthly basis.
5. The group is prioritising its efforts on the essential transitional tasks that need to be undertaken prior to 1 April 2009, namely:
 - To maintain effective and seamless service delivery in all prescribed service areas to at least the equivalent of current performance levels and share best practice where appropriate to enhance service delivery
 - To establish a base line position that includes timelines, financial implications, risks and issues arising
 - To facilitate the implementation of the specialised IT software required to adhere to the legal requirements under the legislation to which the departments work and ensure that Wiltshire Council has the ability to issue Penalty Charge Notices on 1st April 2009.
 - To ensure that the statutory requirements of the Traffic Management Act 2004 are met including the timeframes for dispatch of the statutory documentation and appeals processes
 - To map existing methods and standards of delivery including Residents Parking Schemes, Season Ticket and Tradesman's dispensation schemes, operational policies and operational practices and to agree new standards
 - To ensure that service provider contracts, as appropriate, continue the necessary operational management arrangements during the transition period
 - To put forward proposals regarding structures, roles and responsibilities.

- To arrange the procurement of necessary products and services for the department as required from vesting day such as Pay & Display tickets and bailiff services to ensure economies of scale are achieved as early as possible
 - To provide, on day one, a professional, highly trained and fully corporate branded enforcement team on the streets of Wiltshire publicising the new authority
6. It is important to stress that the objective is to ensure that the current level of service is maintained throughout this period of transition as the four district authorities Parking Services departments merge into one new Wiltshire Council Parking Services Department.
 7. The legislation under which the Parking Services departments enforced changed in March 2008 from the Road Traffic Act 1991 to the Traffic Management Act 2004. From this change of legislation best practice and case law is still being developed. The existing departments and subsequently the new department must be reactive, sometimes at very short notice, to changes.

Transformation

8. Members will be aware of the ambition of the new authority as stated in "We're ready..": *"to seek to use the opportunities offered by a single authority to develop cultural services that foster vibrant communities, improve health and well being, and promote Wiltshire's unique cultural heritage"*.
9. The development of an integrated Parking Services department will allow for a consistency of approach to enforcement across the county, clarifying rules and restrictions for both visitors and residents alike. The local differences within each district will be eradicated ensuring transparency and fairness of approach as required within the Traffic Management Act 2004 without losing the local responsiveness to individual issues.
10. Due to the highly legislative arena under which the work is undertaken there is less flexibility in approach than in some departments. The timeframes and documentation are described in the primary and secondary legislation allowing little or no change or chance to improve the processes. However, this does not preclude the parking services department within One Council from ensuring that we are at the forefront of both best practice and customer service provision.

Resident Parking Permits

11. The provision of Residents Parking Permits will continue to be undertaken by Parking Services. Salisbury accounts for the great majority of Residents Parking Zones and permits. The issue of the permit will continue to be controlled by Parking Services based on the current criteria, including applicants having to produce copies of VQ% and utility bills due to the value of the permit to a member of the public who does not live within the zone when considered against the daily parking charges.
12. Salisbury District Council does not provide a permit on demand by members of the public and all permits are sent to the applicants address via Royal Mail. Therefore no change is foreseen within the time frames regardless of where the permit processing staff are based within the county. The exact location of work for the processing staff has yet to be confirmed.

Use of enforcement Revenue

13. All revenue raised by the issue of Penalty Charge Notices On Street (on the highway and on street parking areas) must be reinvested first and foremost to support the running of the Parking Services department. Any surplus is also strictly regulated and must be used as prescribed under Section 55 of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 to support transport related schemes.
14. Penalty Charge Notices issued Off Street (Council owned car parks) must also first and foremost be used to support the service. However, any surplus from this area can be used for any purpose although it is recommended that transport schemes are supported as a priority.
15. The surplus is not predicted to be large and at the present time no decisions have been taken by the FLS work stream board, the service director or the sustainable transport group on the use of surplus revenue generated by the issue of Penalty Charge Notices that the Parking Project Manager is aware of.
16. Similarly, no decisions have been taken by the use of surplus income from Pay & Display car parks that the Parking Project Manager is aware of.

Conclusion

17. Taking the above factors into account, the time pressures associated with identifying preferred service delivery options for Parking Services as part of the new Wiltshire Council are perceived to be critical. Work is currently being undertaken with the Parking Practitioners Group to highlight the main issues to the FLS work stream board.
18. As such the primary objective is to ensure that sufficient resource is allocated to the Project to ensure the key milestones within the project in relation to IT, location and service delivery are met.

Recommendation

19. The JOSTB is asked to note the report:

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