

**JOINT OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY TRANSITION BOARD (JOSTB)
19 DECEMBER 2008**

SCRUTINY OF THE CRITICAL PATH AND DAY ONE PLAN

First Review - Transitional Progress According to the Critical Path

Purpose and Background

1. An initial meeting was set up on 2 December at the North Wiltshire District Council offices to consider the progress of critical transitional tasks with a view to highlighting those issues that are either at risk of not meeting their target deadlines (amber/red status in the document) or to consider making recommendations to the JOSTB for additional task groups to scrutinise the activities of areas as yet not considered in this way.
2. Councillor Christine Reid, the North Wiltshire District Council representative on JOSTB, has been working on this matter since September and believed that the exercise warranted its own scrutiny task group.
3. Cllr Christine Reed (JOSTB – NWDC), Cllr Jonathon Seed (JOSTB – KDC), Cllr Bill Parks (WWDC), Laurie Bell (Service Director, Policy, Research & Communications), Mark Stone (Transition and Day One Programme Manager), Sue Turfrey (Policy Officer NWDC) and Julia Densham (Scrutiny Support Officer NWDC) attended the initial meeting.

Summary of Concluding Views

4. The role of this Critical Path / Day One task group would be on-going, up to and beyond Vesting Day on 1 April 2009, and would regularly meet to consider the evolving arrangements and their deadlines.
5. It was agreed that the Critical Path / Day One task group would ask Laurie Bell and Mark Stone to liaise with various service areas to present updates to the JOSTB meeting on 23 January 2009. These would include the following:
 - a. Business Management Programme
 - b. Day One Office Arrangements
 - c. Appointments Process
6. Concerns were raised regarding the lack of scrutiny to date in the area of Communications. This included internal communications, external communications, the campaign for community engagement in the new council and the implementation of the new brand.

7. Many of the stages were already being considered by various scrutiny task groups or by members' meetings such as the special meeting of the JOSTB to consider the 2009/10 budget recommendation of the IE on 17 February 2009.
8. While it was recognised that the harmonisation of terms and conditions could not be legally considered until the new council is in operation, concern was raised over the decision to accept the lower than average terms and conditions of the on-going authority.
9. Existing email functionality was considered of utmost importance for district members co-opted during the interregnum period.
10. Several IT issues including the readiness and functionality of the website, and the successful completion of the WAN installation, were to be either considered by a new IT task group or to be referred to the existing Change Management task group.
11. While a 'Welcome Handbook' was being created for employees, it was hoped that there would be such a publication for members.

Recommendations

The following recommendations were made:

- a) The formation of a task group to review the progress of Communications.
- b) To consider the need for a task group focusing on Information and Communication Technology (ICT).
- c) A rapid scrutiny exercise to be undertaken focusing on the readiness of Democratic Services.
- d) A rapid scrutiny exercise to be undertaken focusing on the harmonisation of terms and conditions.

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