

JOINT IMPLEMENTATION BOARD

28 November 2007

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY JOINT ARRANGEMENTS FOR TRANSITION

Purpose

- (1) To report in summary to JIB on the progress made to date on joint OS arrangements so these are given consideration when other areas of the governance process are being developed and implemented.

Background

- (2) Appropriate OS arrangements are required as part of the transitional governance to One Council. The DCLG in consulting on the implementation of LGR were keen to see what local arrangements could be agreed for the OS function for transition.
- (3) Development work has been undertaken by a small joint officer group comprising policy, scrutiny and democratic services staff from all 5 councils at the initiation of WWDC. Soundings were also taken of leading members within the respective authorities at key stages.
- (4) Formal consultation of draft proposals was undertaken during October with the outcome reported to the CC OS Management Committee on 1 November. Agreement to the arrangements was reached in principle between all 5 councils at that meeting.

OS Joint Arrangements

- (5) These joint arrangements are shown in appendix 1 and involve an over-arching joint board – membership set out in appendix 2 along with the names of officers forming the support group referred to in (3) above. It will formally hold the Implementation Executive to public account for its decisions and plans and will have the ability to appoint small task groups and individual members to scrutinise and input to transition work streams and projects based on member interests. The Joint OS Board will elect its own chairman as will any task groups.
- (6) The actual level of OS activity will be dictated by the extent of member interest and therefore the arrangements have been designed to respond flexibly to demand and capacity. Appointments to the various activities will not be made on political proportionality grounds but on the best people for the job. This will be managed and controlled by the

Joint OS Board. In theory all non-executive members will be eligible to engage in these arrangements. Promotion to encourage participation will be undertaken within councils with members on the Joint OS Board taking leadership. The OS principle of transparent, non-executive member led and evidence-based review will be maintained for transition.

- (7) It has been agreed to pool officer resources and budgets and to focus current work programmes of the 5 councils towards transitional issues. It is hoped this will mean that arrangements can be supported within existing resources, although the situation will be kept under review depending on demand.
- (8) Following agreement on 1 November, arrangements are being made to hold a first informal meeting of representatives and substitutes appointed to the Joint OS Board on the morning of 14 December at Urchfont Manor. It is intended that the Leader of the Implementation Executive (or representative) will address members on the importance of challenging, robust and constructive OS in helping to shape how the new council will look and feel. A full briefing on the detailed transitional governance arrangements will be given by the Programme Office Manager.
- (9) Individual councils have been taking a lead in developing specific parts of the arrangements also for discussion at the first meeting as follows:

WCC and WWDC – Constitution, process and procedures

NWDC – Work programme

KDC – Promotion and communication

SDC – Capacity and resources
- (10) Looking to the future, the Joint OS Board will help shape proposals for OS arrangements for the new council and the officer group will also provide advice to the Democratic Services Project (being led by SDC) under the Resources Work Stream.

Matters for Consideration

- (11) To note the joint OS arrangements agreed by the 5 councils and the good progress made towards implementation to date.
- (12) To support continued development of this important area for non-executive members from all 5 councils in the transitional governance process.
- (13) To be aware of the potential implications should member interest and demand outstrip the pooled resources.

- (14) To ensure that these OS arrangements are taken into account when other areas of transitional governance are being developed and implemented.
- (15) To advise the joint officer group on any relevant issues that JIB may have at this stage.

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