

# Shared Services Joint Committee

## Agenda

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**Date:** Wednesday, 3rd February, 2010  
**Time:** 2.00 pm  
**Venue:** Municipal Buildings, Earle Street, Crewe, CW1 2BJ

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The agenda is divided into 2 parts. Part 1 is taken in the presence of the public and press. Part 2 items will be considered in the absence of the public and press for the reasons indicated on the agenda and at the foot of each report.

### **PART 1 – MATTERS TO BE CONSIDERED WITH THE PUBLIC AND PRESS PRESENT**

1. **Apologies for Absence**

To note attendances, substitutes, and any apologies for absence.

2. **Public Speaking Time/Open Session**

Members of the public are entitled to address the Joint Committee on reports contained within the agenda. One person can speak in support of each item, and one against, with a limit of three minutes each. It would be helpful if any person wishing to speak would give prior notice to the Democratic Services Officer named below.

3. **Minutes of Previous meeting** (Pages 1 - 2)

To approve the minutes of the meeting held on 26 November 2009.

4. **Transport Contract Badge Policy** (Pages 3 - 20)

To consider the policy for the issue of badges authorising drivers and escorts employed by third parties to operate vehicles in relation to transport contracts across both Boroughs.

5. **Shared Services Update** (Pages 21 - 28)

To consider a joint report of the Borough Treasurer and Head of Assets (Cheshire East) and the Director of Resources (Cheshire West and Chester) giving an update on transitional shared services due for disaggregation in 2009, the progress of strategic reviews that are currently being carried out, and a work programme for future meetings.

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For any apologies or requests for further information, or to give notice of a question to be asked by a member of the public

**Contact:** Cherry Foreman

**Tel:** 01270 686463

**E-Mail:** [cherry.foreman@cheshireeast.gov.uk](mailto:cherry.foreman@cheshireeast.gov.uk)

6. **Exclusion of the Press and Public**

The reports relating to the remaining items on the agenda have been withheld from public circulation and deposit pursuant to Section 100(B)(2) of the Local Government Act 1972 on the grounds that the matters may be determined with the press and public excluded.

The Committee may decide that the press and public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the following items pursuant to Section 100(A)4 of the Local Government Act 1972 on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraphs 2 and 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972 and public interest would not be served in publishing the information.

**PART 2 – MATTERS TO BE CONSIDERED WITHOUT THE PUBLIC AND PRESS PRESENT**

7. **Shared Services - Staff Reductions** (Pages 29 - 34)

To consider a joint report of the Borough Treasurer and Head of Assets (Cheshire East) and the Director of Resources (Cheshire West and Chester).

**CHESHIRE EAST COUNCIL**

Minutes of a meeting of the **Shared Services Joint Committee**  
held on Thursday, 26th November, 2009 at West Committee Room -  
Municipal Buildings, Earle Steet, Crewe

**PRESENT**

Councillor P Mason (Chairman)  
Councillor Ford (Vice-Chairman)  
Councillor R Short.

Substitute:  
Councillor A Knowles.

Officers in attendance:  
Borough Treasurer and Head of Assets (Cheshire East Council)  
Borough Solicitor (Cheshire East Council)  
HR Business Partner (Cheshire East)  
HR Business Partner (Cheshire West)

**34 ADJOURNMENT OF MEETING**

It was reported that a Member of the Committee had been unavoidably delayed due to problems arising from a hold up on the motorway. The Chairman therefore opened the meeting and then adjourned it for a short period. The meeting reconvened at 2.15 pm.

**35 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors D Brown, M Jones and F Keegan.

**36 PUBLIC SPEAKING TIME/OPEN SESSION**

There were no questions from members of the public.

**37 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING**

RESOLVED

That the minutes of the meeting held on 26 October be approved as a correct record.

**38 EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC**

That the press and public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the following item pursuant to Section 100(A)4 of the Local Government Act 1972 on the grounds that it involved the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraphs 2 and 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972 and public interest would not be served in publishing the information.

### **39 SHARED SERVICES - STAFF REDUCTIONS**

Consideration was given to the joint report of the Borough Treasurer and Head of Assets (Cheshire East) and the Director of Resources (Cheshire West and Chester).

#### **RESOLVED**

1. That the applications for Voluntary Redundancy, as detailed in the matrix, be approved with effect from 4 December 2009.
2. That approval be given to an additional cost for one staff member who had been approved to go on Voluntary Redundancy at the meeting on 26 October, but who had an earlier Redundancy Protection Modification Order date than previously reported on (as detailed in the matrix).
3. That approval be given to the application for Early Retirement from the Senior Teacher of the Deaf, without redundancy.

The meeting commenced at 1.30 pm and concluded at 2.30 pm

Councillor P Mason (Chairman)

## **CHESHIRE EAST COUNCIL AND CHESHIRE WEST AND CHESTER COUNCIL**

### **REPORT TO: SHARED SERVICES JOINT COMMITTEE**

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|                         |   |
|-------------------------|---|
| <b>Date of Meeting:</b> | 3 February 2010   |
| <b>Report of:</b>       | CHRIS HINDLE<br>HEAD OF PLANNING AND TRANSPORTATION AND<br>HIGHWAYS |
| <b>Subject/Title:</b>   | TRANSPORT CONTRACT BADGE POLICY                                     |

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#### **1.0 Report Summary**

- 1.1 To agree and adopt the attached policy for the issue of badges (referred to as the “contract badge” throughout this report) authorising drivers and escorts employed by third parties to operate vehicles in relation to transport contracts across the boroughs of both Councils.

#### **2.0 Recommendations**

- 2.1 To adopt the attached policy for the issue of badges authorising drivers and escorts employed by third parties to operate vehicles in relation to transport contracts across the boroughs of both Councils.
- 2.2 That the Borough Solicitor be requested to prepare changes to the governing instrument to set up a formal process for taking urgent decisions outside the regular cycle of meetings, based on receiving the approval of two members, one being from each of the two Councils.

#### **3.0 Reasons for Recommendations**

- 3.1 Following the judgment of the High Court after a Judicial Review of the former County Council’s procedure, it is necessary to issue a new policy specifying in particular the criteria to be used in deciding whether to issue a contract badge to an applicant.
- 3.2 The Constitution of the Joint Committee does not currently include a procedure for urgent decisions should they become necessary between meetings. The Committee is asked to consider the addition of such a provision in order to facilitate any such future requirements.

#### **4.0 Wards Affected**

- 4.1 All wards within the boroughs of Cheshire East and Cheshire West and Chester

**5.0 Local Ward Members**

5.1 All Members of both councils.

**6.0 Policy Implications including - Climate change None  
- Health None**

6.1 This policy when adopted will replace the existing policy and procedure operated by Integrated Transport Shared Service.

**7.0 Financial Implications for Transition Costs (Authorised by the Borough Treasurer)**

7.1 There are no additional costs to be incurred by either Council.

**8.0 Financial Implications 2009/10 and beyond (Authorised by the Borough Treasurer)**

8.1 There are no additional costs to be incurred by either Council.

**9.0 Legal Implications (Authorised by the Borough Solicitor)**

9.1 The policy has been written in conjunction with the Legal Services of both Councils, and is approved by both.

**10.0 Risk Management**

10.1 The policy is required to comply with the Judgment of the High Court. Failure to adopt a new policy may lead to further court action.

**11.0 Background and Options**

11.1 The attached report went to Shared Services Joint Officer Board on 16 December 2009 . The recommendation of the JOG was that the matter be referred to Cllrs Ford and Mason to be agreed on behalf of the Councils and for the matter to be referred back to the next Shared Services Committee for final ratification. The purpose of this report is to comply with the recommendation of the JOG and to inform the Committee that Cllrs Ford and Mason have agreed the policy on behalf of both Councils.

**12.0 Overview of Year One and Term One Issues**

12.1 The policy may be subject to change from time to time as policy and procedures change, or of there is a change in the law.

**13.0 Access to Information**

The background papers relating to this report can be inspected by contacting the report writer:

Name: Steve Williams

Designation: Senior Manager Integrated Transport Service.

Tel No:01244 973041

Email: [steve.williams@cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk](mailto:steve.williams@cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk)

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# CHESHIRE EAST AND CHESHIRE WEST AND CHESTER SHARED SERVICES MEMBER COMMITTEE

## REPORT TO: SHARED SERVICES MEMBER COMMITTEE

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|                         |   |
|-------------------------|---|
| <b>Date of Meeting:</b> | 16 December 2009                              |
| <b>Report of:</b>       | Richard Turley Head of Highways and Transport |
| <b>Subject/Title:</b>   | TRANSPORT CONTRACT BADGE POLICY               |

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### 1.0 Report Summary

- 1.1 To agree and adopt the attached policy for the issue of badges (referred to as the "Contract Identification Badge" throughout this report) authorising drivers and escorts employed by third parties to operate vehicles in relation to transport contracts across the boroughs of both Councils.

### 2.0 Recommendations

- 2.1 To adopt the attached policy for the issue of Contract Identification Badges authorising drivers and escorts employed by third parties to operate vehicles in relation to transport contracts across the boroughs of both Councils.

### 3.0 Reasons for Recommendations

- 3.1 Following the judgment of the High Court after a Judicial Review of the former County Council's procedure, it is necessary to issue a new policy specifying in particular the criteria to be used in deciding whether to issue a Contract Identification Badge to an applicant.

### 4.0 Wards Affected

- 4.1 All wards within the boroughs of Cheshire East and Cheshire West and Chester

### 5.0 Local Ward Members

- 5.1 All Members of both councils.

### 6.0 Policy Implications including - Climate change None - Health None

- 6.1 This policy when adopted will replace the existing policy and procedure operated by Integrated Transport Shared Service.

**7.0 Financial Implications for Transition Costs (Authorised by the Borough Treasurer)**

7.1 There are no additional costs to be incurred by either Council.

**8.0 Financial Implications 2009/10 and beyond (Authorised by the Borough Treasurer)**

8.1 There are no additional costs to be incurred by either Council.

**9.0 Legal Implications (Authorised by the Borough Solicitor)**

9.1 The policy has been written in conjunction with the Legal Services of both Councils, and is approved by both.

**10.0 Risk Management**

10.1 The policy is required to comply with the Judgment of the High Court. Failure to adopt a new policy may lead to further court action.

**11.0 Background and Options**

11.1 The County Council operated a scheme whereby Contract Identification Badges were issued to drivers who operated vehicles on contracts awarded by the County Council to taxi and transport companies/firms. A challenge was brought by a driver who had applied for a Contract Identification Badge but who was denied a badge. He challenged the policy on the basis that it did not disclose the criteria to be applied by the County Council in deciding whether to issue a badge.

11.2 A Contract Identification Badge is an ID badge that entitles the driver/escort to operate on Shared Service contracts. A firm undertaking a contract could be transporting children to a mainstream or special school or social services clients to day centres. Every driver or escort employed either by the Councils or by a third party firm who undertakes such transport duties must have a Contract Identification Badge. The Badge is personal to the person to whom it is issued, so that the person can change employer within the administrative areas of both of the Councils and still keep their Badge. The Badge is issued for a period of 3 years. On the expiry of the Badge an application for renewal must be made if the driver/escort wished to continue to operate on Council contracts.

11.3 Since 1994, the policy of the County Council was to undertake a criminal record check in relation to drivers/escorts. Prior to the existence of the Criminal Records Bureau which was established in February 2002, the County Council used the Police to undertake searches against the Police National Computer.

- 11.4 Since February 2002, and to date, in order to obtain a Contract Identification Badge an applicant must submit a fee and form to allow a search to be made at the Criminal Records Bureau (CRB). The processing of CRB applications is now undertaken by Employee Services, a Shared Service. Both Councils are a registered body for the purposes of undertaking CRB checks. This gives the Councils the authority to check disclosure applications and validate information provided by an applicant.
- 11.5 When the CRB check has been returned to Employee Services, if the search is clear then it is usual for a Contract Identification Badge to be issued to the applicant. If a search shows the existence of an offence which is disclosed by the CRB (such as offences of violence or of a sexual nature) then further information is sought from the applicant. Further information is also sought if a search discloses no offences but the relevant Police Force has used its discretion to supply other relevant information or information may be reviewed from other sources such as from an employer. Then an officer decision is made as to whether or not the driver is suitable to receive a Contract Identification Badge.
- 11.6 When deciding whether to issue a Contract Identification Badge, regard is had to the Home Office guidelines issued in the Circular 47/93 and also to guidance which was produced by the County Council. The sources refer to matters which are required to be considered such as follows:-
- *Does the post involve substantial access to children or vulnerable adults?*
  - *Does the position involve 1:1 contact with children or vulnerable adults?*
  - *Is the position unsupervised?*
  - *Is the situation an isolated one?*
  - *Is there regular contact with the same child or group of children?*
  - *Are the children particularly vulnerable?*
  - *Are the children under the age of 16?*
  - *Do the children have a physical or learning disability?*
  - *Is there the likelihood of personal care being given?*
  - *Is there access to a service user's home?*
  - *Is there access to a Care Centre?*
  - *The seriousness and relevance of any offence whether it be custodial or by way of a substantial fine, bind over order etc.*
  - *The seriousness and relevance of any additional information where an offence is not recorded*
  - *The age of the driver or escort at the time of the offence or allegation in comparison to the date of the application.*
  - *A pattern of offences or allegations (number of offences/allegations of a similar nature over a period of time).*
  - *Length of time between offences or allegations.*

- *How recent is the latest offence or allegations?*

11.7 If, after consideration of further information and/or an interview of the applicant, the application is turned down, the applicant has the right of appeal to the Head of Strategic Support (Children's Services). The decision of the Head of Strategic Support is final.

## **12.0 Overview of Year One and Term One Issues**

12.1 The policy may be subject to change from time to time as policy and procedures change, or of there is a change in the law.

## **13.0 Access to Information**

The background papers relating to this report can be inspected by contacting the report writer:

Name: Steve Williams

Designation: Senior Manager Integrated Transport Service.

Tel No:01244 973041

Email: [steve.williams@cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk](mailto:steve.williams@cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk)

**CESHIRE EAST AND CESHIRE WEST & CHESTER BOROUGH  
COUNCILS.**

**INTEGRATED TRANSPORT SERVICE**

**TRANSPORT CONTRACT DRIVER/ESCORT BADGE APPLICATION  
PROCESS.**

**Background information.**

It is the Integrated Transport Service's (ITS) responsibility on behalf of both Councils (the Council) to ensure all drivers and escorts who operate Council contracted services have undergone a full enhanced Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) check. For the purposes of this document a "contracted service" includes contracts transporting children with complex and special needs (including social care), mainstream education, community services and registered local bus services to and from schools and colleges (operates term time only).

The following document will highlight the contract identification badge process. This will include the CRB application procedure, the criteria as to what a decision is based upon and the appeal process if the individual applicant is initially deemed unsuitable to work on Council contracts.

The current system that the Council has in place requires that all drivers and escorts must renew their contract identification badge every three years. The renewal of the badge is dependent on the information declared on the new CRB disclosure (plus other relevant information). There is also a system in place to utilise a CRB disclosure that has been obtained via the local Taxi Licensing body for taxi drivers who have recently renewed their Private Hire/Hackney badge (further details can be found below).

There are four stages to the CRB process, (1) application form/verification, (2) application process and (3) application/disclosure return and (4) appeal.

**STAGE 1 - Application form/verification**

The application verification stage can be split as follows;

- a) New applicants are required to take the necessary documentation to their local Council bus information offices (see appendix 2 for office locations). The documentation required is stipulated in the CRB guidance plus a recent passport sized photo and the current fee. The office inspector will then transfer the relevant details onto the application form and issue the applicant with a receipt.
- b) To apply using a CRB disclosure recently used by the local Taxi Licensing body the driver must produce the original CRB disclosure and their new Private Hire/Hackney badge. Copies of both documents will be countersigned to verify that originals have been seen. These documents, signed passport sized photo and current fee will then be

sent to the Council's Employee Service Centre (ESC) for stage 2 of the process. ("recently used" refers to a maximum of 3 months since the issue of the CRB disclosure. The issue date of a new application for a contract identification badge will coincide with the issue date of the CRB disclosure. For existing badge holders, the badge date will be carried forward from the date of the previous badge.

- c) Drivers/escorts who are currently in possession of an identification badge will receive notification eight weeks prior to it expiring. If they wish to renew their badge a request for a form will be required. The procedures in (a) will then apply. If renewed, the badge date will be carried forward from the date of the previous badge.
- d) Disclaimer process – a typical timescale for an application to be processed by the CRB may range from 2 to 10 weeks. In considering the variation within this time period, ITS have implemented a disclaimer process. **This is only applicable to existing drivers and escorts renewing their badge and not new applications.** This process ensures that an applicant can continue to drive or escort on contracts. On receipt of the eight week reminder the driver/escort must apply (as in section c above) within the first two weeks of the eight week period. This will ensure that the CRB are in receipt of the individual application for a minimum of six weeks. If the Council has not received the applicant's disclosure by the end of the six week period (badge expiry date), the applicant can sign a disclaimer. The applicant must sign this document stating that they have no criminal convictions/cautions or any other declaration since their previous CRB check that may compromise their suitability to continue to operate on contracts. Failure to declare will result in their application being revoked.

**With all the above scenarios it must be the individual applicant who presents the above information.**

## **STAGE 2 – Application Process**

All applications are currently processed at the Council's Employee Service Centre (ESC) on behalf of the ITS. The ESC have a number of counter signatories who further verify all the documentation and ensure that the details on the application form will be acceptable to the CRB.

Details of the applications are then recorded on the vetting database. Information held on the database tracks when applications were received, were sent to the CRB and disclosure information received by the Council etc. The ESC will ensure that any additional information for example a medical certificate (if an escort is over the age of 70) or if an applicant has lived in the UK for less than 5 years a certificate of Good Behaviour from the applicant's country (embassy) of origin is required. All information relevant to the driver/escort application will be considered at this stage. A driver/escort that has a clear CRB and no additional information will then be issued with the contract identification badge. If there are offences or allegations on the

disclosure (or relevant information from other sources) the ESC will send the disclosure through to the ITS for further analysis (see stage 3).

If an application for a badge via the taxi licensing route has been received the ESC will write to the appropriate counter signatory to seek clarification that there is no additional information recorded by them for the particular applicant. Once this clarification has been received back, clear disclosures will be processed and a badge issued. Disclosures with offences or relevant information advised will be sent to the ITS for further analysis (see stage 3).

Spreadsheets recording all payments are continuously up-dated.

### **STAGE 3 –REVIEW**

In the majority of cases a decision will be made to issue a badge as the applicant is found to be suitable to operate on transport contracts.

For all disclosures that are returned which are not clear because for example there are offences disclosed, the Council will write to the applicant to advise them that their application is unsuccessful. They are advised that they may ask for this decision to be reviewed. The letter states that if they fail to ask for a review within ten days, the ITS will inform their employer as to their unsuitability and confirm refusal to issue the identification badge. **(ITS accept no responsibility as to whether the Contractor employs or does not employ the driver or escort. The decision is based solely on the person's suitability to drive or escort on Council contracts).**

If the applicant requests a review they will be required to give a full account of the circumstances surrounding any conviction, caution or incident. Two character references will be required from people who the applicant has known for at least two years and who is aware of all the circumstances of the conviction and who must refer to it in their reference. No family references are allowed. All references are followed up to confirm origin.

ITS will make a judgement of the applicant's suitability on the basis of the additional information. If ITS is still concerned about the applicant's suitability they will be offered an interview with two members of staff from ITS.

If, following the interview, the applicant is still deemed unsuitable, this will be confirmed in writing and the applicant informed of the right of appeal. The applicant must register an appeal within 14 days of being informed that the application is denied.

### **STAGE 4 APPEAL**

A request for an appeal must be made in writing and must be received by ITS within 14 days of the date of the letter informing the applicant that their application is denied.

All the associated material will be sent to Head of Strategic Support in the Children and Young People's Services, who will then conduct a final interview with the applicant, consider all the relevant information and make a decision. If the appeal is denied, the applicant will receive a letter informing them of their unsuitability. Their employer will be informed in due course.

If the applicant's appeal is successful they will be issued with a badge immediately.

**In both cases the decision is final.**

Date: 2009



## **APPENDIX 1 – CRITERIA**

The decision whether to issue a Contract Identification Badge is made at the discretion of the Council. In deciding whether to issue a Contract Identification Badge, the Council will take into consideration the following matters. It is the responsibility of all applicants to obtain the information he or she intends to put forward in support of their application and to bear the costs of doing so:

The applicant must provide the following and it is the responsibility of the applicant to provide the information if those circumstances apply:

1. CRB check. If a CRB result identifies an offence(s) of any nature ( and whether or not the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 applies) or any advisories ITS will have to carefully consider whether it is appropriate to issue a Contract Identification Badge. In deciding whether to do so, ITS will consider factors such as:

- The seriousness and relevance of any offence whether it be custodial or by way of a substantial fine, bind over order etc.
- The seriousness and relevance of any additional information where an offence is not recorded
- The age of the driver or escort at the time of the offence or allegation in comparison to the date of the application.
- A pattern of offences or allegations (number of offences/allegations of a similar nature over a period of time).
- Length of time between offences or allegations.
- How recent is the latest offence or allegations
- Does the post involve substantial access to children or vulnerable adults?
- Does the position involve 1:1 contact with children or vulnerable adults?
- Is the position unsupervised?
- Is the situation an isolated one?
- Is there regular contact with the same child or group of children?
- Are the children particularly vulnerable?
- Are the children under the age of 16?
- Do the children have a physical or learning disability?
- Is there the likelihood of personal care being given?
- Is there access to a service user's home?
- Is there access to a Care Centre?

ITS when assessing the suitability of a driver or escort, has been granted an exemption from applying the rehabilitation period directives. Therefore, certain offences that would otherwise be classed as “spent” may be considered when assessing an application.

The type of offences/allegations that have a major influence on an applicant’s suitability are as follows;

- Violence including grievous bodily harm, assault, battery etc
- Indecency
- Sexual nature
- Drugs related
- Those related to vulnerable people
- Carrying or the use of weapons.
- harassment, discrimination or racism

The above is not a comprehensive list.

2. Any other information of any nature which comes to the attention of the Council by whatever means and/or which the Council considers relevant and which is requested to be provided to the Council by the applicant, such as :
  - a. Three references. Two references must be from previous employers. Employer references must be on headed paper and signed by a director or partner of the employer, and who must identify themselves as such. Every reference must be signed by the person writing it. The Council reserves the right to contact every referee to verify the reference. If a reference does not satisfy the requirements of this paragraph it will not be considered. If an applicant does not have an employment history, then an alternative referee may be accepted, such as from a teacher or G.P. or a social worker. A reference from a member of the applicant’s family is not acceptable; and/or
  - b. Full employment details for the previous 10 years, stating name and address of employer, job held, dates of employment and reason for leaving. The Council may contact previous employers to verify information given by the applicant even if the employer is not named as a referee. If at any time during the 10 year period an applicant has been employed by the Council ( or its predecessors Cheshire County Council or any of the 6 Cheshire District Councils) the applicant must state the name of his or her line manager who must also be a referee. The Council may take into account the applicant’s work history whilst in its employment or that of the 6 District Councils including but not limited to periods of sickness and/or disciplinary proceedings and/or grievance matters; and /or
  - c. Details of any medical condition which has the potential to impact upon the applicant’s ability to perform driving duties, together with a letter from the applicant’s GP or Consultant which confirms the

applicant's ability to perform driver/escort duties and management of the occupants of the bus;and/or

d. Details of any transport licence issued from a neighbouring authority or licensing authority; and/or

e. Certificates from relevant training courses.

3. The information provided in support of the application for a Contract Identification Badge will be considered in accordance with the Council's policies on child protection and adult protection in force at the time of the application, together with the Council's statutory duties. If an applicant fails to provide information which is relevant and which falls into any of the criteria above, and which later comes to the attention of the Council, the Council reserves the right to withdraw the Contract Identification Badge without notice. A right of appeal will exist in these circumstances.

For the purpose of the above document "the Council" refers to Cheshire West and Chester and Cheshire East Councils.

## **APPENDIX 2**

### **Bus Station Addresses**

#### **Ellesmere Port**

Transport Information Kiosk  
Ellesmere Port Bus Station  
Civic Way  
Ellesmere Port  
CH65 0AP

#### **Chester**

Transport Information Kiosk  
Chester Bus Exchange  
Princess Street  
Chester  
CH1 2EF

#### **Northwich**

Transport Information Kiosk  
Market Traders Car Park  
Watling Street  
Northwich  
CW9 5EX

#### **Crewe**

Transport Information Kiosk  
Crewe Bus Station  
Delamere Street  
Crewe  
CW1 2JA

#### **Macclesfield**

Transport Information Kiosk  
Macclesfield Bus Station  
Queen Victoria Street  
Macclesfield  
SK11 6LP

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## **CHESHIRE EAST COUNCIL CHESHIRE WEST & CHESTER COUNCIL**

### **REPORT TO: SHARED SERVICES JOINT COMMITTEE**

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|                         |  |
|-------------------------|--|
| <b>Date of Meeting:</b> | 3 February 2010  |
| <b>Report of:</b>       | Cheshire East – Borough Treasurer & Head Of Assets<br>Cheshire West & Chester – Director of Resources  |
| <b>Subject/Title:</b>   | Shared Services Report regarding: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Disaggregation of transitional shared services</li><li>• Strategic review progress</li><li>• Future schedule</li></ul> |

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#### **1.0 Report Summary**

- 1.1 This report provides an update on activity relating to transitional shared services. It indicates which services, where the sharing arrangements were scheduled to end in 2009, have successfully completed the disaggregation.
- 1.2 The report also provides the Shared Services Joint Committee with an update on the work programme relating to strategic service reviews and the relationship to VR decisions being put to the Joint Committee.
- 1.3 Also included in this report is a proposed schedule for future items for consideration by the Joint Committee.

#### **2.0 Recommendations**

- 2.1 That members confirm the closure of shared service arrangements for those services disaggregating in 2009 where the transition has now been completed and approved by Joint Officer Board, i.e. the Schools Admissions service. Details of the transition work are provided in sections 7 and 12.
- 2.2 That members note the progress to date relating to the strategic reviews currently underway and the relation to the separately documented VR proposals to the Joint Committee.
- 2.3 That members note the future agendas and proposed items for the Joint Committee and approve the programme of work required to meet this schedule.

### **3.0 Reasons for Recommendations**

- 3.1 The shared governance and financial arrangements should be ceased for the service that has been disaggregated as both Councils have now taken over the responsibilities associated with this service.
- 3.2 Details of the strategic reviews currently underway are provided to inform members of the work in progress and inform the consideration of the VR proposals for Members.
- 3.3 The proposed schedule of items for consideration has been included in this report in order to respond to questions previously raised by Members and to enable better planning of Joint Committee meetings.

### **4.0 Wards Affected**

- 4.1 This report relates to shared services that operate across both Cheshire East and Cheshire West & Chester so all wards are affected in both Councils.

### **5.0 Local Ward Members**

- 5.1 Not applicable.

### **6.0 Policy Implications including - Climate change - Health**

- 6.1 None.

### **7.0 Financial Implications for Transition Costs**

- 7.1 The net costs, not including grant income, associated with the Schools Admissions shared service that has now been disaggregated has been calculated as £173,613.
- 7.2 This cost compares with £179,000 as set out in the original business plan for this shared service. As such, this service has delivered within the agreed total budget for the service despite incurring additional cost due to the extension of the sharing arrangement for a period of 2 months, as previously approved by the Joint Committee.
- 7.3 Both Councils are now monitoring budgets and costs associated with this service separately, with no further recharges and cost sharing arrangements required.



## **8.0 Financial Implications 2009/10 and beyond**

- 8.1 Each Council is now separately responsible for managing budgets and costs for this service.

## **9.0 Legal Implications**

- 9.1 As the sharing arrangements for the Schools Admissions service have now ended, the following legal documents govern the procedures for finalising the disaggregation of service:

- The Service Agreements for these services;
- The secondment arrangements for these services.

- 9.2 The Administrative Agreement sets out the overall arrangements in relation to the manner in which the Authorities will work together.

- 9.3 These documents and legal advice indicate that confirmation of the cessation of sharing arrangements by the Joint Committee is sufficient to legally end a shared service.

## **10.0 Risk Management**

- 10.1 There is a risk that the services provided by each Council separately do not deliver the required respective operational and financial outcomes. This will be monitored by each Council separately.

## **11.0 Background and Options**

- 11.1 Legal arrangements, business plans and service delivery statements have been developed for all shared services and presented to the Joint Officer Board and the Joint Committee.

- 11.2 The Business Plan supplements the Service Agreement. It provides details of the Shared Service operation, plans and investment for the next three years. However, the requirements beyond the first year of operation are subject to change as each Council further develops their needs and objectives. As such, the Business Plan is subject to yearly review and amendment as appropriate.

- 11.3 The Service Delivery Statement sets out the measures by which the shared service performance will be assessed, including performance indicators and benchmarks.

- 11.4 All services are now working in accordance to these agreements and plans, delivering services to both Councils under the guidance of the Joint Officer Board and the Joint Committee.

## **12.0 Disaggregating Services**

- 12.1 The Schools Admissions shared service has now completed the disaggregation to separate services provided by each Council. The sharing arrangements for this shared service were extended by the Joint Committee to enable issues with staffing, ICT and support processes to be resolved while service continuity was maintained.
- 12.2 Reports have been provided to the Joint Officer Board evidencing the completion of the transition to ensure that both Councils have effectively taken over the work provided by these services. Both Councils have set up separate services, with appropriate staffing levels, taken over all statutory duties and split budgets.
- 12.3 The costs associated with each service have been calculated and the appropriate recharges made between the Councils.

## **13.0 Strategic Reviews**

- 13.1 In accordance with the business plans for shared services, strategic service reviews have started for the following services:
- Libraries Specialist & Support Services;
  - Highways & Geotechnical Laboratory;
  - CBS Supplies.
- 13.2 Terms of reference for these reviews have been documented and agreed at the Joint Officer Board. Further reviews are scheduled to start in the near future. The output of all reviews will be presented to the Joint Committee for consideration.
- 13.3 The Libraries Specialist & Support services review has initially been investigating the potential for efficiency savings predicated on co-location of elements of the service.
- 13.4 While appropriate accommodation for the service is still being sought, with locations in both East and West Cheshire being investigated, a number of initial efficiency savings have been identified and agreed by service managers in Cheshire East and Cheshire West & Chester. These are presented in a separate paper to the Joint Committee. Further savings may be possible once an appropriate location has been found; Joint Committee approval will be sought for the relocation and appropriate efficiency savings.

- 13.5 The review will, once the location issues have been resolved, seek to improve the operation of the shared service, focusing on commercial opportunities, e.g. with Schools, process improvements and cultural issues to ensure that the service is self-sufficient so far as is possible and is configured to maximise efficiency and deliver the appropriate service to both clients, Cheshire East and Cheshire West & Chester.

#### **14.0 Future Joint Committee Schedule**

- 14.1 At the last Joint Committee meeting in November 2009, questions and points of clarification were requested about the future schedule of decisions that are required from the Joint Committee.
- 14.2 The schedule for Joint Committee includes:
- Evaluation of the outcome of strategic service reviews;
  - Confirmation of the closure of shared service arrangements for those services disaggregating in 2010;
  - Performance and financial reviews for shared services;
  - Review of revised Business Plans and Service Delivery statements for all continuing shared services.
- 14.3 Other items such as VR proposals as they arise from the above are not shown in the schedule at this time as is the case with general shared services issues, such as the review of the secondment model currently in place.
- 14.4 Where possible, similar items have been grouped to provide themes for the future Joint Committee meetings.

| Service Name                             | Feb                      | Mar             | Apr                | May                 | Jun             | Jul                | Aug                  | TBD                  |
|--|--------------------------|-----------------|--------------------|---------------------|-----------------|--------------------|----------------------|----------------------|
| HR & Finance                             |                          |                 | Review performance |                     |                 | Review performance | Review Business Plan | Review performance   |
| ICT                                      |                          |                 | Review performance |                     |                 | Review performance | Review Business Plan | Review performance   |
| Farms Estate                             |                          |                 |                    |                     | Evaluate Review |                    | Review Business Plan |                      |
| Civil Protection                         |                          |                 |                    |                     |                 |                    | Review Business Plan |                      |
| Occupational Health                      |                          |                 |                    |                     |                 |                    | Review Business Plan |                      |
| Archives                                 |                          |                 |                    |                     |                 |                    | Review Business Plan |                      |
| Libraries                                | Evaluate VRs from review |                 |                    |                     | Evaluate Review |                    | Review Business Plan |                      |
| Emergency Duty Team                      |                          |                 |                    |                     | Evaluate Review |                    | Review Business Plan |                      |
| International Unit                       |                          |                 |                    |                     | Evaluate Review |                    | Review Business Plan |                      |
| Rural Touring Network                    |                          |                 |                    |                     |                 |                    | Review Business Plan |                      |
| Approved Mental Health Professional      |                          |                 |                    |                     |                 |                    | Review Business Plan |                      |
| Autism Support                           |                          |                 |                    |                     |                 |                    | Review Business Plan | Sign-off transition  |
| Sensory Impaired Services                |                          |                 |                    |                     |                 |                    | Review Business Plan | Sign-off transition  |
| Urban Traffic Control                    |                          |                 |                    |                     |                 |                    | Review Business Plan | Sign-off transition  |
| Highways & Geotechnical Lab              |                          | Evaluate Review |                    | Sign-off transition | n/a             | n/a                | n/a                  | n/a                  |
| Highways Maintenance Contract            |                          |                 |                    |                     |                 |                    | Review Business Plan | Sign-off transition  |
| Integrated Transport Services            |                          |                 |                    |                     |                 | Evaluate Review    | Review Business Plan | Sign-off transition? |
| Children's Centres Development Programme |                          |                 |                    |                     |                 |                    | Review Business Plan |                      |
| Schools Admissions                       | Sign-off transition      |                 |                    |                     |                 |                    |                      |                      |
| Student Finance                          |                          |                 |                    |                     |                 |                    | Review Business Plan | Sign-off transition  |
| Archaeological Service                   |                          | Evaluate Review |                    | Sign-off transition | n/a             | n/a                | n/a                  | n/a                  |

| <b>Service Name</b>              | <b>Feb</b> | <b>Mar</b>      | <b>Apr</b>      | <b>May</b>          | <b>Jun</b>          | <b>Jul</b> | <b>Aug</b>           | <b>TBD</b>           |
|----------------------------------|------------|-----------------|-----------------|---------------------|---------------------|------------|----------------------|----------------------|
| Drug & Alcohol Action Team       |            | Evaluate Review |                 | Sign-off transition | n/a                 | n/a        | n/a                  | n/a                  |
| Commissioned Community Equipment |            |                 | Evaluate Review |                     |                     |            | Review Business Plan | Sign-off transition  |
| Learning Resource Network        |            |                 | Evaluate Review |                     |                     |            | Review Business Plan | Sign-off transition  |
| Domestic Abuse Partnership       |            |                 |                 | Sign-off transition | n/a                 | n/a        | n/a                  | n/a                  |
| Visual Impairment Services       |            |                 |                 | Sign-off transition |                     |            |                      |                      |
| NVQ Assessment Centre            |            |                 |                 | Sign-off transition | n/a                 | n/a        | n/a                  | n/a                  |
| Waste & Mineral Planning         |            |                 |                 | Sign-off transition | n/a                 | n/a        | n/a                  | n/a                  |
| CBS Supplies                     |            | Evaluate Review |                 |                     | Sign-off transition | n/a        | n/a                  | n/a                  |
| Youth Offending Team             |            |                 |                 |                     | Evaluate Review     |            | Review Business Plan | Sign-off transition? |

## **15.0 Access to Information**

The background papers relating to this report can be inspected by contacting the report writers:

*Officer: Lisa Quinn, Borough Treasurer & Head of Assets – Cheshire East Council / Julie Gill, Director of Resources – Cheshire West & Chester Council*  
*Tel No: 01270 686628 / 01244 977830*  
*Email: [lisa.quinn@cheshireeast.gov.uk](mailto:lisa.quinn@cheshireeast.gov.uk) / [Julie.gill@cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk](mailto:Julie.gill@cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk)*

### **Background Documents:**

*Documents are available for inspection at:*

*Cheshire East Cabinet Report – Shared Services – 7<sup>th</sup> October 2008*  
*Cheshire West and Chester Executive Report – Joint Liaison Committee*  
*Recommendations: Caretaker and Nominated Councils; Shared Services:*  
*Service Delivery Option; Shared Back Office Services – 15<sup>th</sup> October 2009*  
*Cheshire East Cabinet Report – Shared Services – 3<sup>rd</sup> March 2009*  
*Cheshire West and Chester Executive Report – Shared Services – 18<sup>th</sup> March 2009*  
*Cheshire East Cabinet Report – Shared Services – 23<sup>rd</sup> March 2009*  
*Cheshire Shared Services Joint Committee Report – 10<sup>th</sup> June 2009*  
*Cheshire Shared Services Joint Committee Report – 13<sup>th</sup> July 2009*  
*Cheshire Shared Services Joint Committee Report – 3<sup>rd</sup> September 2009*  
*Cheshire Shared Services Joint Committee Report – 30<sup>th</sup> September 2009*  
*Cheshire Shared Services Joint Committee Report – 26<sup>th</sup> October 2009*  
*Cheshire Shared Services Joint Committee Report – 26<sup>th</sup> November 2009*

*Documents are available for inspection at:*

*Cheshire East Democratic Services*  
*Westfields*  
*Middlewich Road*  
*Sandbach*  
*CW11 1HZ*

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By virtue of paragraph(s) 2, 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972.

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