

CHESHIRE EAST COUNCIL

CABINET

Date of meeting: 10 June 2009
Report of: Director of Resources
Title: Cheshire Shared Services Communications

1.0 Purpose of Report

- 1.1 A Communications plan to support the effective delivery and understanding of the Shared Services has been developed and is being implemented through the Board.

A communications matrix is attached

2.0 Decision Required

- 2.1 Members are asked to approve the communications plan.

3.0 Financial Implications for Transition Costs

- 3.1 The branding and communications plan has been developed by the in-house communications, marketing and design teams for the two councils. There are no direct costs associated with this work.

The purchase of a website domain name will cost in the region of £50 - £70.

4.0 Financial Implications 2009/10 and beyond

- 4.1 Once the branding has been agreed it will be for each service to procure their own branded items e.g. stationery, uniforms, livery, signage.

The decision for purchase of goods will be dealt with on a service by service case, based on the comparative costs of the need for goods and the life of the Service.

Most of the communications activity is internally focussed and will take the form of e-communications. This work will be conducted by the respective web teams and service content managers.

5.0 Legal Implications

- 5.1 There no legal implications.

6.0 Risk Assessment

- 6.1 Services need to be able to order their branded items quickly, particularly those that are public facing in order to conduct their business and not resort to using unbranded material as this does not enhance the professional reputation of either authority.

7.0 Background and Options

7.1 Branding achieved to date

Good progress has been made on branding. Development has taken account of the need to properly represent the separate identity of Shared Services while retaining a look and feel that is relevant and in keeping with the branding developed for both the West and East councils.

Visual presentations for a range of items were submitted to the joint board.

To enable Shared Services business to proceed unhindered in the short term the following items have been agreed for use:

- Letterhead
- Business cards
- Compliment slips.

7.2 Branding to be approved

Further work has been done to develop other items that will need to be branded. Decisions will need to be made on a case by case basis on whether it is prudent to provide new branded items, for example vehicle livery or signage depending on the expected life of the service.

Items still to be approved include:

- T-shirts
- Name badges
- High visibility jackets
- Identity badges
- Signage - time related for certain services
- Vehicle signage – time related.

Branding guidelines for Shared Service will be published on the intranet.

Enquiries about branding and requests for branded goods will be dealt with by the design teams in each council. Services should approach their host council design team.

7.3 Intranet

There is a Shared Services area now available to staff via the intranet. However this is an early design and will be replaced. A more sophisticated design based on the branding already agreed by the joint board is currently being worked on. This still requires final agreement. The new intranet design will have a generic home page. Each Shared Service will have its own area on the intranet and will be responsible for its own content management.

Once agreed the new intranet will be launched with key messages to all employees.

7.4 Newsletter

An on-line newsletter for staff in Shared Services will be produced. It will be publicised on both the West and East intranets to alert staff to its presence.

Among articles in the first edition will be a message outlining commitment from both CE's and the Leaders.

It will be published following the Members meeting on 10 June.

7.5 Key communications

As well as the elements described above regular team briefings and face to face communications are embedded into the communications plan. This approach allows employees to raise issues and areas of concern. Ensuring staff feel that they are being kept informed is considered an important element of the communications strategy.

Trade Union representatives have been invited to attend meetings of the joint board to allow them to raise issues on behalf of their members and to brief them about progress on the development of the Shared Services.

8.0 Overview of Day One, Year One and Term One Issues

8.1

9.0 Reasons for Recommendation

9.1

For further information:

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Background Documents:

Documents are available for inspection at: