

CHESHIRE EAST COUNCIL CHESHIRE WEST & CHESTER COUNCIL

SHARED SERVICES JOINT COMMITTEE

Date of Meeting: 18th May 2018

Report of: Dominic Oakeshott – Chair of the Joint Officer Board

Subject/Title: Shared Services Joint Committee Governance Update

1. Report Summary

- 1.1 The Shared Services Joint Committee (SSJC) was formed in 2009 as part of the overall governance arrangements between the two Councils at the time of the Local Government Review (LGR), supporting the high level of shared services, prior to the separation of those services. The Committee was formed with its own Constitution, Terms of Reference and Financial Memorandum along with a supporting Joint Officer Board. The arrangements have been periodically reviewed and this report seeks the views of members on the completion of a more fundamental review ahead of the new Council year in May 2018.
- 1.2 The governance arrangements for the Joint Committee have remained in their originating format since LGR, although the remit of sharing of services has changed fundamentally over the same time. One of the most significant changes has been that the work of the Committee has altered from overseeing the sharing of services to contributing to developing and shaping the change agenda where the two Councils can share services. The two Councils share five services that operate in a stable fashion, with the activity being effectively managed through commissioning, service, and client managers, with three areas, ICT, Transactional Services and Archives and Local Studies transforming their models of operation.
- 1.3 Reflecting on the recent working arrangements for the Committee there is an opportunity to bring a new focus for the shared services and this report outlines a number of proposals for change following a workshop with both JOB and Shared Services Joint Committee members on 2nd May 2018.

2 Decision Requested

Members are asked to:

- 2.1 Agree that the Shared Services Joint Committee moving forward will undertake a deeper focus on those shared services in a state of change and transition (ICT Services, Transactional Service Centre, Archives & B4B at this time).
- 2.2 Agree that the five remaining shared service currently operating in a stable fashion will only produce a short annual update outlining the year's performance, achievements and any planned significant changes in the future for the committee.
- 2.3 Agree to two formal Shared Service Joint Committee meeting per year taking place in May and November and one informal workshop.
- 2.4 Agree that if required a Shared Services Joint Committee can be called by exception by the Chair.
- 2.5 If required, establish informal joint working groups made up from representatives of this Committee along with officers of both Councils to discuss potential future sharing opportunities.
- 2.6 To note these changes if agreed would come into effect following the next Shared Services Joint Committee meeting scheduled in July 2018.

Following the Shared Services Joint Committee the Constitution, Terms of Reference and Financial Memorandum will be updated to reflect any decisions taken.

3 Reasons for the recommendation

- 3.1 The changing nature of the sharing of services provides the Shared Services Joint Committee an opportunity to review and update its constitutional arrangements helping to provide a stronger future focus.

4 BACKGROUND

- 4.1 The Shared Services Joint Committee was formed in 2009 after LGR, when it had responsibility for a wide range of shared activity between the two Councils (approximately 65 shared services). It was required to oversee the separation of County Council services between the two new Councils and ensure this was managed in an orderly and financially prudent manner.

The current number of shared services has remained stable in the recent past and currently stands at eight as detailed below:

- Libraries Specialist Support
- Civil Contingencies and Emergency Planning
- Farms Estate
- Archaeology Planning Advisory
- Cheshire Rural Touring Arts Network
- ICT
- Transactional Service Centre
- Archives and Local Studies

- 4.2 ICT Shared Services and the Transactional Service Centre (TSC) are the largest of the current shared services, both of which are transforming their service arrangements following a common approach.
- 4.3 The Archives and Local Studies Service is undertaking a review of its buildings estate and is working on proposals that will see a bid to the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) that will modernise the building infrastructure and through that the ways of working, continuing to share service across the County area. Updates on the projects are regularly reported through to this committee and will continue at later meetings.
- 4.4 The remaining five shared services are stable, with service managers and client managers working together to agree and implement service and budget plans through each Council's own planning processes. Outturn reports have not highlighted any areas of concern.
- 4.5 The Joint Officer Board met with the managers of these service areas and established that there are agreed commissioning plans and performance is reviewed as part of the normal Council(s) outturn processes. The nature of the shared arrangement has developed over the recent years resulting in more formalised shared arrangements, with the service and staff being provided by one or other of the Councils, operating under an agreed service contract.
- 4.6 Following the agreement of the SSJC a workshop was held on 2nd May 2018 with SSJC members Joint Officer Board Officers to develop proposals regarding the governance arrangements for the Shared Services Joint Committee.
- 4.7 Members agreed that the SSJC is a positive experience and gave an opportunity to discuss shared services changes in a supportive forum. However, frequently there is insufficient business and meetings have been cancelled, whilst at other meetings the content has simply been short

update reports, resulting in shorter meetings and in many cases the same content featured at other member governance meetings.

- 4.8 The workshop agreed in principle that a proposal to reduce the number of meetings but with a deeper focus on the Shared Services going through a transition would be best use of the both the SSJC and JOB's focus.
- 4.9 Those shared services in a stable state will be managed as very light touch or exception based as there are a number of officer and member governance mechanisms already in place. A short annual update accompanying the outturn report outlining the year's performance, achievements and any planned significant changes in the future for the committee will be produced.
- 4.10 Discussion on the purpose of the Committee following the transition of the Shared Services going through change to a more stable state led to the need to put in place further SSJC and Officer working groups to identify opportunities to review the committee governance further and to identify if there are more opportunities in the future to share.
- 4.11 It is suggested that the JOB retains its role supporting and facilitating the work of the Joint Committee, focussing more of its activity and time on shared opportunities, whilst also reducing its frequency of meetings to mirror SSJC.
- 4.12 Following the discussion and conclusions at this meeting, it is suggested that the arrangements and the SSJC Constitution, Terms of Reference and Financial Memorandum, alongside those of the JOB shall be updated. The changed arrangements being included in a comprehensive update report to the July SSJC meeting, setting the revised governance in place for the future.

5. Wards Affected and Local Ward Members

- 5.1. None

6. Implications of Recommendation

6.1. Policy Implications

There are no known Policy implications.

6.2. Legal Implications

Legal will be fully involved in developing the revised agreements, governance.

6.3. Financial Implications

There are no specific Finance implications however the stream lining will improve and increase the focus due to the nature of the suggestions whilst also reducing the work load and time commitment for all involved.

Equality Implications

There are no equality implications

6.4. Rural Community Implications

There are no impacts on the rural community

6.5. Human Resources Implications

There are no specific HR or Finance implications however the stream lining will improve and increase the focus due to the nature of the suggestions whilst also reducing the work load and time commitment for all involved.

6.6. Health and Wellbeing Implications

There are no known implications on Health and Wellbeing at this time

6.7. Implications for Children and Young People

There are no implications of Children and Young People

6.8. Overview and Scrutiny Committee Implications

There are no known specific impacts at this time.

6.9. Other Implications (Please Specify)

None

7. Risk Management

7.1. None.

8. Access to Information

8.1. Previous reports which set out the background are available publically.

9. Contact Information

Contact details for this report are as follows:

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