

2020 Joint working
Programme board 4 July 2014

Notes

1. Attendees

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| Councillor Steve Jordan (Chair) | Councillor Jon Walklett |
| Councillor Patrick Molyneux (apologies) | Councillor John Burgess |
| Councillor Mark Booty | Councillor Brian Robinson |
| Andrew North | David Neudegg |
| Ralph Young | Peter Hibberd (apologies) |
| Jane Griffiths | Alison Murray(via speaker phone for item 4) Bill Oddy |

2. Notes from previous meeting

Cllr SJ felt that it would be appropriate to formalise the chairing of the meetings at the next meeting given that it was likely that meetings would be held in CBC. The original intention had been to rotate the chair in line with the hosting authority.

Action: JG next agenda

3. Programme definition

The document had been considered at the previous meeting and had been updated to reflect comments received.

It was agreed that the following amendments were agreed:

- To clarify what is meant by sponsoring group
- To update section 5.2 so that the programme board is the gatekeeper to all new projects which fall within the remit of the 2020 Vision Programme.
- Officers will appoint relevant officers to the programme team and update the document accordingly.
- Quarterly meetings were a good target but in the initial phases the meetings will take place on a monthly basis.

Action: RY to update

It was agreed that the document should be reviewed again in early October, revisiting the scope of the programme and projects and governance arrangements to support the programme.

Action: JG agenda October

4. Pensions advice

Alison Murray (AM) from AON Hewitt joined the meeting via conference call. The company had produced a report which had been circulated with the agenda, and she spoke to slides a copy of which is attached to the notes.

It was noted that there were savings which could accrue from moving to a new employment model but that this was based on a number of assumptions and on the way in which the actuaries and trustees for the existing LGPS view the matter particularly in the existing values and treatment of deficits. It was also noted that for existing bodies the Gloucestershire LGPS has a stabilisation mechanism which enables deficits to be paid for over a longer period of time. AM also reminded the programme group that a number of the risks and liabilities relating to the existing LGPS will accrue regardless of the employment model adopted and therefore should be treated separately when considering the business case. She advised that it would be important for the councils to have a dialogue and negotiations with the funds, both with the trustees who will make the ultimate decision and with the actuary who will be advising the trustees.

AN asked if there was anything specifically we should be asking from the government, as they are keen for transformation but pensions could become a block. AM felt that it would be useful to get DCLG to support the councils with their negotiations with the fund administrators. She advised that DCLG can issue a direction order. The company/ies would be owned by the councils and therefore financially secure so liability and risk shouldn't increase. DCLG would put pressure on the administrative authority to take a longer term perspective during negotiations and that the council enters into some form of guarantee agreement.

She also referred to the existing LGPS legislation which was not helpful with regards to bodies without active members, and that this legislation could be relaxed.

BR was concerned that the councils in Gloucestershire are building up deficits by paying a reduced %. AM said that this was an unusual feature of the way in which the fund is administered. BR also asked whether the consultation about merging funds will be helpful in the future. AM advised that the DCLG having taken advice have decided to drop any proposals to merge funds but they are consulting on the benefits of active and passive fund management, and the use of investment vehicles.

It was agreed that it would be useful to have a collective discussion with the DCLG. AN advised that his s151 officer was already planning to meet with civil servants so this meeting/teleconference would be extended to include all four councils s151 officers.

Action: AN to advise Mark Sheldon

DN also thought that it would be useful if AON Hewitt could prepare some outline bullet points on the issues we should raise with DCLG, and that this should also be shared through the district council network/LGA so that they could also take up the issue nationally.

Action: RY to get AON Hewitt to prepare bullet points and DN to share with national networks.

5. Public protection

BO gave a presentation on the work which had been undertaken to date and initial findings (a copy of which is attached to the notes), reminding the group that the services were around 20% of the workforce, high profile and important for the quality of life of an area. He acknowledged that although very different areas geographically, the service demand, risk profile and scale were very similar across the four areas.

He advised that working with officers from all four councils they had looked at how a service could be developed that would meet the vision of being a responsive front line service, which is flexible and scalable to meet local needs. He outlined thoughts about how management and administrative expertise could be shared to create a more resilient and flexible service, with a clear performance framework, whilst maintaining a local presence to meet local demand and out of hours needs. He had created a resource allocation model looking at the current 73 discrete public protection tasks and working with officers from the four councils had concluded that it was estimated that savings of around £1.2m could be generated. This figure was largely consistent with and verified the original business case assumptions for a shared service. It was noted that no service design work had been undertaken yet, no account had been taken of any pensions benefits of a new model or costs relating to the alignment of in-house provision for those services which were out of scope and retained.

In response to a question from BR; BO advised that he had not undertaken any modelling based on CBC not being part of the shared service. BR felt that the travel distances to FODC if CBC were not part of the shared arrangement could negate any savings which may accrue. It was also noted that the resource modelling savings did allow for service improvement but had not taken account of staff who may currently undertake corporate and not service specific activity and this would need to be factored into any further consideration of total resources.

AN outlined CBC position, and explained that following a commissioning review a cross party group of members had agreed that the best approach was to align public protection with other built environment services. They were keen to see how services could be delivered in a different way to meet the needs of the business customers and thereby creating greater prosperity for the town. CBC was also aware this approach could have a knock on effect on new homes bonus and business rates. The REST project (as it was being called) would be using a systems thinking approach, eliminating failure demand and designing services around the customers it serves. Once services have been redesigned then there would be opportunity to consider sharing them, but it was important to have a dialogue around ICT platforms etc to see what savings could be delivered through the use of shared technology.

The programme board felt that the two projects were not mutually exclusive and members felt that they would want to see any shared service following a similar customer approach as to the one being adopted by CBC. Both MO and BR felt that there were massive opportunities both in terms of efficiency and customer services and there needed to be a way of progressing within the context of 2020 Vision. It was agreed that the Programme Team would discuss further and report back to a future meeting.

Action: Programme Team to discuss alignment of the two workstrands and report back to future programme board. BO to remodel the business case on the basis of a 3 way share.

6. Any other business

- Gloucester City – SJ and AN had met with the leader and one of the strategic directors. Gloucester City had confirmed that they are continuing with their own direction of travel.

- Interim management arrangements – Amanda Atfield is preparing a tender brief to go out the following week, with a view to the programme board making a selection at their meeting on 25 July.