



CABINET

5TH JUNE 2014

AGENDA ITEM (7)

A 20/20 VISION FOR JOINT WORKING

Accountable Member	Councillor Lynden Stowe Leader of the Council
Accountable Officer	David Neudegg Chief Executive 01285 623000 david.neudegg@cotswold.gov.uk

Purpose of Report	To consider a collective vision for shared working across the GO Shared Services Partner Councils
Recommendation(s)	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Note the contents and the broad strategic direction for joint working as set out within the 2020 Vision for Joint Working (Annex A).2. Approve the establishment of a 2020 Vision Programme Board consisting of one Councillor Representative from each Council.3. Authorise the 2020 Vision Programme Board to develop a programme plan; business case; and consider any efficiency savings that could be delivered for 2015/16 with a further report to partner councils in Autumn 2014.4. Authorise the 2020 Vision Programme Board to submit applications to the Transformation Challenge Award for additional funding support.5. Approve the allocation of Transformation Challenge Award funding to support the development of the programme.6. Confirm that Cheltenham Borough Council act as Accountable Body for authorising expenditure against the programme on the unanimous recommendations of the 2020 Vision Programme Board.
Reason(s) for Recommendation(s)	To meet the Council's vision of being the most efficient Council in the country

Ward(s) Affected	All
Key Decision	Yes
Recommendation to Council	No

Financial Implications	<p>The outline business case identifies the shared annual revenue savings at the end of a 5 year period to be £5.5m. For this Council, the additional shared services benefit is anticipated to be in excess of £1,150,000 per annum, which is £550,000 above that already identified for shared services within the Medium Term Financial Plan.</p> <p>All costs associated with developing the proposals to the next stage can be met from the grant awarded under the Transformation Challenge Award Fund.</p>
Legal and Human Rights Implications	None
Environmental and Sustainability Implications	None at this stage
Human Resource Implications	If Councils approve the development of a programme, some additional staffing resources will be required to support its development. Any backfilling of substantive posts on a temporary nature will be funded from the Transformation Challenge Award grant.
Key Risks	These are set out in the Vision Document
Equalities Analysis	No effect on protected groups identified.

Related Decisions	Various Cabinet Reports relating to Joint Working
Background Documents	Transformation Challenge Award Prospectus
Appendices	Annex 'A' - A 2020 Vision for Joint Working

Performance Management Follow Up	To implement the Cabinet's decisions
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Options for Joint Working	The proposal seeks to enhance working in partnership with the other neighbouring local authorities.
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Background Information	
1.	Set out in Annex 'A' is the vision for joint working endorsed by Leaders and Portfolio Holders responsible for efficiency and shared services for formal consideration by each Council.
2.	The vision is for a number of Councils, retaining their independence and identities, but working together and sharing resources to maximise mutual benefit leading to more efficient, effective delivery of local services.
3.	Cotswold District Council already has a track record of developing innovative arrangements irrespective of traditional District, County or Regional boundaries. The approach set out in the report builds on that firm foundation and provides a very strong basis to support a new model for local government. It will provide efficient collective shared Officer support arrangements able to provide distinct and bespoke advice to a cluster of independent Councils focused around existing District Council localities without the need to consider political mergers. This model is scalable not only in terms of numbers of partners but also in the scope of services.

4. External Funding Support

4.1 Last summer, the Government invited bids under the Transformation Challenge Award for innovative shared working proposals. The Leaders of the GO Shared Services Councils (Cotswold, West Oxfordshire and Forest of Dean District Councils, and Cheltenham Borough Council) agreed to submit a bid for a range of initiatives that the councils were interested in investigating further. These included:

- reviewing shared management structures and rationalising employment arrangements;
- extending the range of shared back office services;
- extending the number of Local Authority owners of UBICO Ltd, the environmental services provider and extending the range of environmental services offered;
- exploring a shared Public Protection Service.

4.2 Although this bid was unsuccessful at the time, the Leaders of the Councils requested that Officers from the Partner Councils develop a proposal for a new forward thinking vision for joint working and shared services.

4.3 In March of this year, the partnership was awarded a grant of £500,000 to support the development of our joint proposals from the Transformation Challenge Award.

4.4 The Government has recently announced further funding opportunities for the Transformation Challenge Award for 2014/15 and 2015/16. This funding is available to support English local authorities transform their operation, make changes to their business processes and work with the wider public sector to improve services for local people.

4.5 It is considered that, if this report is approved by all of the Councils, the partnership will be eligible for funding for both tranches of the Programme and could pool any awards to deliver the vision and objectives set out in this report. The timescales set out within the vision have been designed to meet deadlines for submission to the Transformation Challenge Award Programme.

4.6 In addition to the opportunities to secure Government funding, Council Leaders have recognised the need to meet each of the individual Council's savings targets in line with their existing Medium Term Financial targets. For some, this means being able to deliver significant revenue savings for 2015/16. It is therefore recommended that the programme plan builds in proposals for interim proposals that can be implemented early, reducing management overheads without a loss of capacity. This will further enable the quicker deliver of shared service options and business cases.

4.7 Programme implementation costs will be identified alongside the development of a more detailed business case. It is anticipated that the current allocation from the Transformation Challenge Award will meet any development costs prior to further consideration by Councils in the Autumn.

4.8 It is recommended that a joint member Programme Board with a Cabinet Member from each Council is established to oversee the development of the detailed business case for future consideration by Partner Councils.

4.9 It is further suggested that the funds secured against the Transformation Challenge Award fund be delegated to the Programme Board to allocate against the development of a more detailed business case and programme implementation if subsequently approved at a later date. Cheltenham Borough Council will act as Accountable Body for the fund and any expenditure.

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