



AGENDA ITEM (11)

2020 VISION PROGRAMME

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 the report to the 2020 Vision Partnership Member Governance Board (attached as an Annex to this covering report), in advance of consideration by Cabinet and Full Council.
Recommendation	That the Committee considers the report and makes any comments thereon prior to formal consideration by Cabinet and Council.
Reason(s) for Recommendation(s)	The 2020 Vision is a Key Task identified in the approved Corporate Plan which supports the objective of providing value for money services that effectively meet the needs of customers. The Committee is invited to provide independent comment on the report.

Ward(s) Affected	All
Key Decision	Yes
Recommendation to Council	This matter will be a recommendation from Cabinet to Council

Financial Implications	The outline business case (Appendix C to Annex to this covering report) sets out the detailed financial implications of the 2020 Vision programme. The objective is to ultimately deliver approximately £1.7m of annual recurring revenue savings.
Legal and Human Rights Implications	These are contained within the Annex to this covering report
Environmental and Sustainability Implications	Not applicable
Human Resource Implications	These are included within the Annex to this covering report

Key Risks	These are contained within Appendix C to the Annex to this covering report.
Equalities Impact Assessment	An Equalities Impact Assessment has been completed and is attached at Appendix E to the Annex to this covering report
Related Decisions	Cabinet , 4 th December 2014 - Approval of establishment of a shared services partnership venture, and related decisions Cabinet , 11 th June 2015 - Approval of Memorandum of Understanding
Background Documents	2020 Partnership/Programme Board Minutes
Attachment(s)	Annex - Report to the 2020 Vision Partnership Member Governance Board, including - Appendix A - Proposed Partnership Structure Appendix B - Commissioning Report Appendix C - Business Case ('hard' copy attached for Committee members only) Appendix D - Joint Committee Draft Constitution Appendix E - Equality Impact Assessment
Performance Management Follow Up	(i) On-going staff engagement; (ii) Reports to Cabinet and Council; (iii) Further reports and updates to Overview and Scrutiny Committee
Options for Joint Working	The 2020 Vision programme is a partnership between this Council, Cheltenham Borough Council, Forest of Dean District Council and West Oxfordshire District Council.

Background Information

1. In December 2014, each 2020 Partner Council, through their respective decision-making arrangements, resolved to:

- Establish a shared services partnership venture in early 2015 between the four authorities, managed by a joint committee operating under a Memorandum of Understanding for an interim period pending a further decision in the autumn of 2015;
- Establish the roles of Interim Lead Commissioner, Interim Managing Director of the partnership venture and the appointment of the Programme Director.
- Agree the creation of a project to develop effective commissioning arrangements for each authority, including exploring the potential for sharing commissioning functions where possible.

2. The decision was informed by a report drafted by Activist, which set out a number of outcomes, recommendations and principles that the new Partnership Venture will need to deliver against.

3. The 2020 Vision sets out an ambition for the authorities to become more efficient and effective by working together but without sacrificing their sovereignty - in fact, their ability to take the decisions needed for their locality would be strengthened.
4. The four authorities share a focus on efficiency and on achieving value for money for council tax payers. This concern for efficiency goes hand-in-hand with the partner authorities' shared vision of a district council having a wider responsibility for what is often characterised as 'place-shaping'.
5. A key shared challenge is addressing the year-on-year reductions in central government grant to local authorities. Each council's medium term financial strategy requires significant savings. Additionally, all four councils face a longer-term challenge of how to deal with the increasing costs of funding the employers' contributions to the Local Government Pension Scheme.
6. The authorities have made it clear that they would prefer not to make reductions in service levels or cut non-statutory services if at all possible.
7. Additionally, whilst there was a strong emphasis on the need for efficiency savings, there is also a recognition that sharing could provide access to greater capacity and help make services more resilient.
8. The report also identified a series of challenges that members said they would like to see addressed as part of the detailed design phase of the Partnership Venture. These included the preservation of the sovereignty and identity of each local authority; the importance of maintaining local knowledge so that the public and members knew that they had staff they could rely on to respond effectively; and protecting what is unique about each authority. Additionally, each authority wanted access to impartial commissioning and client side advice from people they trust.
9. At its Meeting on 1st July 2015, the Overview and Scrutiny Committee considered a consultation paper setting out a number of key principles and proposals to meet the objectives and address the concerns. The **Annex** to this report includes the report presented to the 2020 Vision Partnership Member Governance Board, and agreed for formal consideration by each of the Partner Councils.
10. Each Partner Council will consider the report through its formal processes between now and the end of October. The Risk Register recognises that there remains a possibility of not all councils agreeing to the recommendations within the report.
11. An independent review of the Business Case has been undertaken by CIPFA and Proving Services. Their initial feedback is that the Business Case is positive with a large degree of tolerance making it both achievable and deliverable. They do, however, also identify that some differences between the partners are impacting upon the scale of ambition that could be achieved by the programme. Officers are liaising with the advisers to understand these issues further and identify the potential scale of additional financial savings that may be possible.
12. As part of the consultation, some Councillors queried where the 2020 Vision Programme sits in relation to the Government's devolution agenda. Both Gloucestershire and Oxfordshire councils have signalled their intent to seek further powers from Government as part of the current devolution agenda. In both cases, the aim is to bring responsibility for significant public expenditure to a single point of control, thus creating the potential to secure higher quality outcomes for local people in the context of reduced public expenditure.
13. Devolution is not an alternative to the 2020 Vision Programme - the two concepts would work well together. Devolution is about securing higher level strategic decision making powers from government or other national agencies together with additional funding that goes with those powers. The 2020 Vision Programme is about finding more cost-effective ways of delivering local services in light of the continuing squeeze on local funding. The 2020 Vision Programme does not undermine any devolution conversations; if it progresses it would enhance our collective ability to respond to any powers that might be devolved because the four partners would have a louder voice together than they would alone.