

REPORT TO: Cabinet
LEAD OFFICER: Chief Executive

1 April 2020

SHARED SERVICES 2020/21 BUSINESS PLANS

Purpose

1. To seek Cabinet's comments on and approval of the Shared Services Business Plans 2020/21.
2. This is not a key decision and is being presented to Cabinet in accordance with the protocol set out in the Shared Services Partnership Agreement. It was first published in the January 2020 Forward Plan.

Recommendations

3. Cabinet is recommended:
 - 1) subject to any comments made, to approve the Business Plans for each of the Shared Services attached in the Appendix hereto; and
 - 2) to authorise the Shared Services Management Board to approve final amendments to the Business Plans in line with comments received from all three partner councils.

Reasons for Recommendations

4. The Shared Services Agreement requires business plans to be approved every year. The Business Plans ensure the services adhere to the original objectives and contribute towards the partner councils' strategic objectives. The Shared Service Business Plans provide direction and set out how each will meet agreed business cases targets and contribute to delivery of the SCDC Corporate Plan. However, given that three Councils are commenting on these shared plans, a mechanism must be put in place to incorporate those comments. Delegating authority to the Shared Service Management Board will enable final amendments to be made to the Business Plans in line with comments received from all three partner Councils.

Executive Summary

5. Shared Services have been in existence for almost five years. All Shared Services are extensively engaged in developing the use of technology to deliver greater business efficiency and effectiveness. All the 2020/21 Business Plans look towards transforming the services to deliver against the councils' needs by demonstrating flexibility and agility, while at the same time harmonizing the way the partner councils operate.

6. The Business Plans must be formally endorsed by the three partner councils. Consequently, it is recommended that the Shared Services Management Board is authorised to approve any final amendments to the Business Plans in line with the comments received from the partners.

Background

7. In July 2015, Cambridge City, Huntingdonshire District and South Cambridgeshire District Councils approved a lead authority model for shared services, where an agreed lead council would be responsible for the operational delivery of a service. Business cases for individual services were approved at the same time. It was further agreed that relevant staff would transfer to lead councils under the Transfer of Undertakings (Protection of Employment) Regulations 2006.
8. The partner councils have agreed the following shared services objectives:
 - Protection of services which support the delivery of the wider policy objectives of each council.
 - Creation of services that are genuinely shared between the relevant councils with those councils sharing the risks and benefits whilst having in place a robust model to control the operation and direction of the service.
 - Savings through reduced managements costs and economies of scale.
 - Increased resilience and retention of staff.
 - Minimise the bureaucracy involved in operating the shared service.
 - Opportunities to generate additional income, where appropriate.
 - Procurement and purchasing efficiencies, and sharing of specialist roles which individually, are not viable in the long-term.
9. In 2015 the three councils also entered into a formal sharing Agreement. There followed a considerable amount of work to develop staffing structures, working practices and service parameters. The formal Agreement requires the preparation of individual business plans for the services each year. The Business Plans contain key priorities, objectives, activities, financial information, measures of success and risk mitigation arrangements.
10. The Business Plans contain performance information to the point in the year that they were produced. The Shared Services Management Board monitors performance on a quarterly basis. The Annual Report will contain a comprehensive appraisal of performance and will be published in June / July.
11. Lead Members at each of the partner councils have been consulted on the Business Plans. Their role is to provide advice and oversight, to challenge and recommend for endorsement the Shared Services Business Plans and Budgets. Equally, each of the Shared Services have consulted with the partner councils' management teams and with their customers. Details are contained within each of the Business Plans attached.

Considerations

12. The Business Plans will be implemented within each Shared Service during the year 2020/21. The Head of each Shared Service will be responsible for the overall operation of their service, the delivery of the Business Plan and the achievement of performance and financial targets. These will be monitored by the Shared Services Management Board.

Options

13. An option could be not to support the documents or to recommend amendments. Any major amendments would be required to be considered and agreed by each of the partner Councils.

Implications

14. In the writing of this report, taking into account financial, legal, staffing, risk management, equality and diversity, climate change, community safety and any other key issues, the following implications have been considered: -

Financial

15. The Shared Service business cases contribute to and are in line with the SCDC medium term financial strategy.

Staffing

16. Staffing issues, changes and costs are detailed in each of the Shared Service business plans.

Consultation responses

17. Significant consultation with staff and Unions took place during the establishment of the Shared Services.

Effect on Strategic Aims

Aim D - An innovative & dynamic organisation

18. Improve efficiency and value for money within a viable financial strategy.

Background Papers

Where [the Local Authorities \(Executive Arrangements\) \(Meetings and Access to Information\) \(England\) Regulations 2012](#) require documents to be open to inspection by members of the public, they must be available for inspection: -

- (a) at all reasonable hours at the offices of South Cambridgeshire District Council;
- (b) on the Council's website; and
- (c) in the case of documents to be available for inspection pursuant to regulation 15, on payment of a reasonable fee required by the Council by the person seeking to inspect the documents at the offices of South Cambridgeshire District Council.

No background papers were relied upon in the writing of this report.

Report Author: Mike Hill - Director of Housing, Health and Environmental Services
Telephone: (01954) 713229