



CHILTERN
District Council

SOUTH BUCKS
District Council

Stronger in partnership

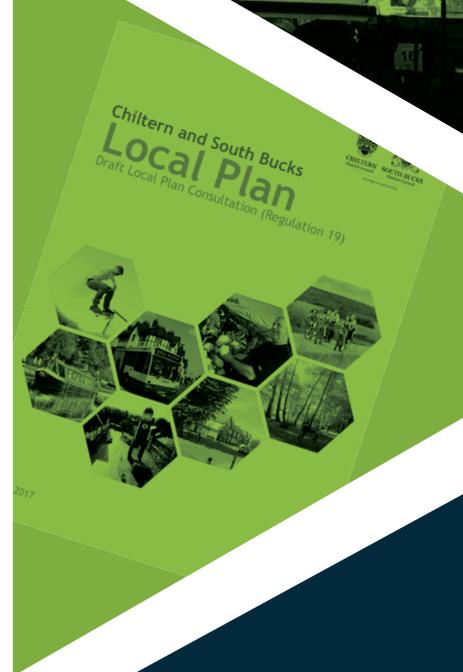


Chiltern and South Bucks
Building Control Service



Builders Partnership Scheme

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Joint Working Case Study June 2017

Introduction

In 2012 Chiltern District Council and South Bucks District Council made a commitment to make progress together and put in place a shared senior management team to create savings, improve resilience and provide better services to the public.

Both Councils were used to working together, had long standing partnerships and broadly similar characteristics and needs, with the shared imperative to save money.

What followed was a programme ("phase 2") to integrate services and form a single delivery

organisation whilst at the same time identifying improvements, new ways of working and a culture of continuous improvement.

Central to this programme was a series of shared service reviews, delivered internally, based on a Customer Centric Change Framework.

This case study highlights the achievements and lessons learned from the joint working between Chiltern District Council and South Bucks District Council.



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Objectives of phase 2

The Inter-authority Agreement, agreed by the Councils in January 2012 set the following objective for phase two of its transformation programme.

“To examine the opportunities for further savings by the joining together of services, assets, officer posts and officer teams”.

One of the principles of the Inter-authority agreement was that:

“Services and assets will be considered for sharing in Stage Two of the arrangements where there is a robust Business Case for doing so and where the proposed shared arrangements are politically and economically viable”.

The Joint Committee and Management Team also set the objectives for shared services to deliver in three areas, savings, resilience and service quality. This became known as the programme triangle.



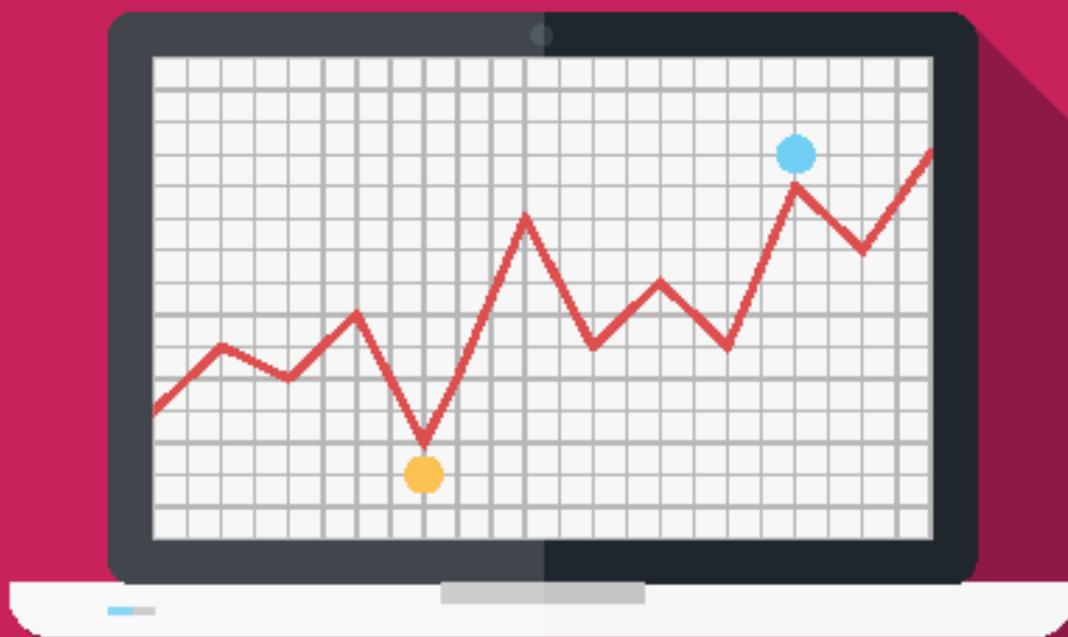
Achievement against phase 2 objectives (outcomes & timescales)

Outcomes: By January 2017, 19 services have been reviewed with business cases and shared service designs reported to and agreed by the Joint Committee. The Councils are now served by an almost complete platform of shared services. The only shared service yet to be implemented is Planning Services and this is already underway.

Timescales: The programme of shared service reviews commenced in October 2012. The original objective was to conclude the programme of reviews by summer 2015. The last shared service review, Planning Services, reported to the Joint Committee in January 2017.

The pace of the programme was affected by:

- The internal capacity to deliver the reviews in house
- The requirement for significant staff engagement
- Allowing for the identification of improvements and new ways of working
- The capacity of Support Services to support implementation
- The requirement to manage the impact on front line services
- Adopting a pace that Members were comfortable with



Shared services review completion & implementation dates

Service Area	Date business case approved	Date shared service implemented
Licensing	April 2013	March 2014
Community Safety	April 2013	March 2014
Building Control	July 2013	April 2014
Housing	October 2013	April 2014
Parking	February 2014	September 2014
Finance	February 2014	August 2014
Legal	April 2014	February 2015
Community Services	July 2014	April 2015
Planning Policy	July 2014	February 2015
Property and Facilities Management	October 2014	April 2015
Policy, Performance and Communications	February 2015	August 2015
Human Resources	February 2015	September 2015
Environmental Health	March 2015	December 2015
Customer Services	March 2015	December 2015
Business Support	July 2015	January 2016
Revenues and Benefits	November 2015	May 2016
Waste Management	February 2016	October 2016
Democratic Services	August 2016	January 2017
Planning Services	January 2017	Currently being implemented

The anticipated benefits of phase 2

At the start of the programme the benefits were identified in the Inter-Authority Agreement as:

- save money for local taxpayers
- deliver better services to the public, particularly in the sharing of specialist teams
- maintain front line resilience
- improved capacity for self-sustaining change
- generate possibilities of further savings
- rationalisation of office space and assets
- more efficient purchasing and procurement

Achievements against these benefits are set out in the following pages and in appendix 3.



Benefits realised

Save money for local taxpayers (savings & income)

In addition to the £660,000 savings from creating a joint senior management structure, the shared services reviews have identified £1,237,200 of ongoing savings / income per annum, so the total savings achieved are £1,897,200 pa.

Service Area	Full year income / savings £
Licensing	36,500
Community Safety	43,400
Building Control	72,300
Housing	120,500
Parking	65,800
Finance	62,000
Legal	82,000
Community Services	110,000
Planning Policy	14,000
Facilities and Property Mgt	66,000
Policy, Performance Comms	3,700
Human Resources	24,700
Environmental Health	87,700
Customer Services	19,200
Business Support	62,300
Revenues and Benefits	127,200
Waste Management	18,000
Democratic Services	17,700
Planning Services	302,700
Senior Management Savings	660,000
TOTAL	1,897,200

Costs of phase 2 service reviews

The one off costs directly associated with the programme (over 4 years) were as follows:

Internal costs	Cost £
2 FTE Project Officers	250,600

External costs	Cost £
External Support (first three reviews and knowledge transfer)	76,600
External Support Customer Services	16,800
External Support Revenues and Benefits	8,750
External Support Planning Services	25,900
Total	128,050

Deliver better services to the public, particularly in the sharing of specialist teams

Each service review introduced changes and innovations and these are shown in appendix 3.

The appendix demonstrates that for all front line services improvements, recognisable by the public, have been delivered.



Maintain front line resilience

Resilience has been improved or maintained through:

- Greater flexibility from a single combined resource
(better able to deal with peaks and troughs in demand and sickness)
- Reduced key person dependency
- Increased sharing of ideas, expertise and knowledge
- Addressing gaps in capacity

Performance monitoring over the period of the programme shows there was no significant decrease in the performance of the Councils as a result of the programme.

Improved capacity for self-sustaining change

The service reviews contributed to a culture of continuous improvement and a range of staff have learned new tools and techniques in relation to business analysis, programme management, project management and implementing change.

The Councils also developed robust repeatable processes for the integration of systems and the restructure of teams.

Some services, such as Revenues and Benefits and Planning Services have built in change related roles into their permanent structure and the review of Business Support established Programme and Project roles which support both ICT and Corporate change projects.

Generate possibilities of further savings

The shared services programme put the Council on a platform which provides further opportunities to:

- Develop services to meet customer needs and reduce costs
 - Rationalise property assets further through flexible and mobile working and a strategic review of accommodation
 - Make best use of the unified ICT systems to support efficient service delivery
 - Take advantage of income generating proposals
-

Rationalisation of office space and assets

- 40% reduction in ICT servers and related hardware without compromising business continuity
- Reduction in number of software licenses for the main applications, including Microsoft
- 25% reduction in office accommodation, including vacation of one building enabling opportunities to let to external tenant



More efficient purchasing & procurement

Joint working has significantly increased the number of joint contracts for the two authorities, which reduces costs of procurement and makes for more efficient contract management.

Joint contracts are in place in the following areas:

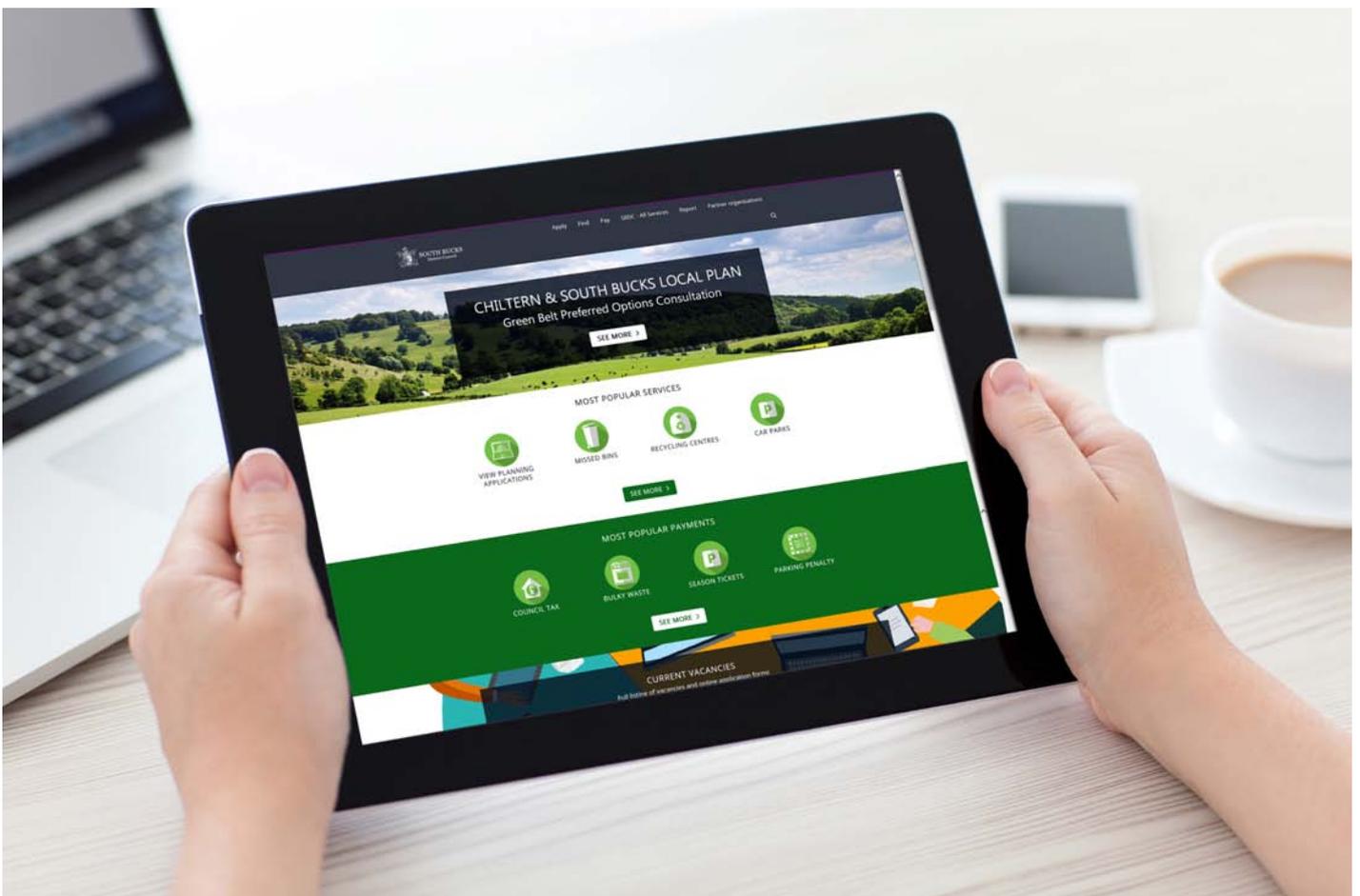
- Financial Services - payroll, insurance, audit, banking services
- Facilities management - office cleaning, printing/copying
- Telephony and communications services - WiFi, mobile phones, switchboard
- Planning studies and consultancy advice related to Local Plan development or national infrastructure issues
- Environmental Health - pest control, dog control
- Property Services - valuation advice, grounds maintenance, utilities

Other benefits

- Opportunities for staff in terms of development and progression
- More logical and resilient staff structures better orientated to the future
- The start of the development of a culture of managing change, and seeking continuous improvement

Follow on actions after programme closure

- Deepen the common approach within the political and sovereignty constraints
- Continue to deliver the benefits and changes outlined in the business cases
- Build on the single delivery organisation and progress to phase 3 transformation work “Stronger in Partnership”
 - Flexible and Mobile Working
 - Customer Experience Strategy
 - Single culture based on customer focus and continuous improvement





Appendix contents

- 1** Lessons learned - service reviews
- 2** Lessons learned - implementation of a shared service
- 3** Benefits by service

1 Lessons learned - service reviews

- Using a customer centric change framework to bring services together made the programme more than just a merger, it provided something positive for staff to focus on and a vehicle to identify improvements and new ways of working
- Strong programme management is needed to consider the best order, timing and pace of reviews and balance the resources available for running the reviews, delivering the service and implementing the shared services
- Strong project management and a structured approach enables effective goal setting, management of issues and inspires confidence in the reviews
- Running the reviews in house helps develop internal capacity around change provides the opportunity to identify talent, develop staff and demonstrate they are valued and was an approach preferred by staff subject to the reviews
- Establishing and working with Members Working Groups was essential to gain Member support and understand political sensitivities
- Members engagement focussed on being effective as opposed to being a rigid formal process
- Formal and informal engagement with the two lead Members for each review was indispensable
- Leaving the most challenging review until last (Planning Services) was a good strategic decision because by this point we had got really good at delivering the framework and had learnt and applied lots of lessons from previous reviews
- Fact and evidence led approaches, thorough analysis and objectively made recommendations greatly helps with difficult decisions
- Engage staff in a variety of ways, they will have many answers, spot mistakes, provide realism and ultimately more likely to support the changes
- Engaging staff on sensitive and potentially unsettling issues can add significant value by encouraging a culture of openness
- Allow space for thinking time, do not just crash through the framework

2

Lessons learned - implementation of a shared service

- Ideally you need clear shared managers in place before real implementation of a single approach can start, they are needed for leadership and to make quick decisions around the new approach
- Be realistic, the first priority is to get the shared service functioning and protecting performance
- You need strong repeatable processes for the staff restructure and ICT systems integration
- Without a project manager implementation can be unstructured, messy and things can be missed
- A shared service will be far from perfect at the start, on its first days it may be messy, unclear and there will be elements where there is not a clear approach, the key point is that it is a long term endeavour to progressively drive out the new processes within the constraints placed on the service
- Staff need to understand that the shared service will not be perfect from day one
- Provide opportunities for staff to get to know each other, break down the barriers as the cultural differences between the two authorities are real, forming design teams helped staff get to know each other



3 Benefits by service

Licensing

Benefits of new arrangements

- The licensing application processes was improved through improved website content and a wider set of integrated electronic forms replacing manual forms and data entry into the UNIFORM system
- Since the review, fifteen new forms have been developed for South Bucks, two new forms for Chiltern and four forms which are both new for South Bucks and a significant improvement for Chiltern

Community Safety



Working together for a safer
Chiltern and South Bucks

Benefits of new arrangements

- Reduced duplication from the production of the Community Safety Partnership Plan
- A better fit with the geography of the Local Policing Area
- Easier for partnership colleagues to engage with the service
- Admin resource to release capacity from the Community Safety Manager



Chiltern and South Bucks Community Cards scheme, working in partnership with Thames Valley Police, sponsored by LEGOLAND® Windsor Resort and GLL

Building Control

Benefits of new arrangements

- Moved to a completely paperless approach and significantly decreased the time taken to register an application
- More professional capacity in a single team
- More consistent and simpler procedures for customers
- Greater resilience in the administrative function

Housing

Benefits of new arrangements

- A more consistent and robust approach across the two Councils
- Re-design of the process to apply to be on the housing waiting list. The new process incorporated a housing options assistance module which replaced a paper form process, provides tailored advice at the point of application, informs an applicant of their eligibility earlier in the process cutting down on verification documents and also a reduction in the documentation asked for lower risk applicants. The benefits have been improved signposting and management of customer expectations, less paper, reduced manual keying into the Locata system, improved accuracy and data quality and reduced time spent on verification
- The management of homelessness applications and ongoing cases was improved through the use of the homelessness prevention and advice manager module which allows the homeless status and notes to be recorded in the system to increase the availability of information and the co-ordination of the team's response to homelessness applications and contact

Parking

Benefits of new arrangements

- Utilising technology to move towards cashless parking – This would be a phased approach, initially with a single pay by phone system across both Councils and potential adaptation of all pay and display machines to accept credit / debit cards, as well as cash. Pre-paid charge cards could also be available for purchase via both Councils' reception teams. These approaches would reduce cash collection, processing and banking costs
- Approximately 10% (SBDC) and 16% (CDC) of penalty charge notices are issued because the pay and display ticket is face down on the dash board of a vehicle and can't be read or where a vehicle is not displaying a valid season ticket. These are often cancelled when a valid parking ticket / season ticket is produced which takes up officers' time. Processes in the future will be designed to minimise occurrences and make it easier for officers to check, thus minimising time and effort spent later in the process cancelling issued ECN's/PCN's
- Encouraging significant channel shift for customers by directing them to a single interface available through the Councils' websites providing all general customer parking information. This would include for example online application of season tickets and viewing evidence of contraventions and the appeals process
- Saving on postage and printing by utilising electronic single vehicle season tickets and not posting out actual copies
- A single software package for the enforcement process that covers both Council areas and accommodates the slightly different enforcement processes required for the 1984 and 2004 Parking Acts

Parking ...continued

Benefits of new arrangements

- Enhanced handheld computers / printers for all the parking attendants that use plain printer paper (remove need for controlled stationary), registration number scanners to identify vehicles with season tickets/paid by phone and have the functionality to remotely connect to back office systems in real time, removing the need to physically go into the office to download data and automatically issue enforcement notices compliant with the right act dependent upon location
- Improved systems for the parking attendants to identify whether customers have paid for parking using the pay by phone system



Finance

Benefits of new arrangements

Sundry Debtors

- To start emailing sundry debtor invoices and reminders, rather than posting these, to save time and printing / posting costs
- To standardise the recovery processes and adopt more rigorous recovery processes to increase recovery rates
- To develop electronic invoice request processes and reduce manual rekeying, to improve the efficiency of the process and reduce the scope for error

Purchase to Pay

- To streamline the process of setting up new suppliers, to improve the efficiency of the process
- To move to bi-weekly payment runs and the payment of all approved invoices on each payment run, to improve the efficiency of the process
- To stop the SBDC petty cash system once a new online expense process is in place

Cash and Bank

- To let a joint bank contract, following on from the CDC decision to move away from using the Co-Op
- To roll out the CDC cash receipting system to SBDC. This will standardise the cash and bank systems, remove manual rekeying and facilitate the ability for SBDC to charge for payments made by credit card

Finance *...continued*

Benefits of new arrangements

Payroll

- To let a joint payroll contract as the current contracts are due to expire. The new contract will require the new contractor to provide online forms for expense, mileage and overtime claims. This will improve the efficiency of the process as manual forms will no longer have to be keyed in
- The new contract will also require self-service for personal data updates (eg change in bank details, car details, address) and will allow payslips to be emailed. These changes will improve the efficiency of the process

Treasury Management

- To standardise the treasury management procedures across the two authorities by having a single team responsible for treasury management
- To review the Treasury Management practices and strategies across the two authorities to standardise as far as possible based on best practice. Note complete standardisation is unlikely to be achievable as the authorities are unlikely to have exactly the same investment risk appetite

Capital

- To review the CDC capital budgeting process to attempt to streamline this
- To standardise the capital procedures across the two authorities by having a single lead capital officer
- To appoint a single valuer to revalue both the CDC and SBDC assets

Finance *...continued*

Benefits of new arrangements

Insurance

- To let a joint insurance contract as the current contracts are due to expire
- To standardise the insurance procedures across the two authorities by having a single lead insurance officer

Management and Financial Accounting and Other Tasks

- To use Integra to automate more reporting processes in order to improve the efficiency of the accounting processes
- To review the management and financial accounting practices and strategies across the two authorities to standardise as far as possible based on best practice
- To move towards using the intranet more as a first point of contact for customers
- To provide on line training modules for any officer that deals with financial matters

Legal

Benefits of new arrangements

- Working with clients to improve the quality of instructions
- Improved professional supervision throughout the process
- Two specialist teams has provided clarity for the teams and for the customers and helped deepen expertise
- Reduced number of direct reports to the Head of Legal and Democratic Services
- The development of internal expertise in the areas of High Court litigation and complex property and regeneration work
- Case Management Software to centralise and increase access to information, co-ordinate cases, improve performance management information about the time spent and the costs of handling cases and reduced paper
- A flexible self-funding legal resource to provide advice and support on major projects

Community Services

Benefits of new arrangements

- Joint project working utilising the expertise and experience of initiatives currently being delivered at one authority and where appropriate rolling it out across the other. Capitalising on lessons already learnt and based on current best practice
- More focussed partnership working, with reduced involvement in lower value partnership
- More shared working and crossover with less duplication particularly with regard to attendance at partnership meetings
- Reviews of the process around grants and the value of the various partnerships is also very likely to help improve service quality
- Reduce duplication of monitoring systems

Planning Policy

Benefits of new arrangements

- More efficient and cost effective arrangement for the development of a Joint Local Plan
- A stronger voice in the sub region in relation to strategic planning issues, particularly in the context of the Duty to Co-operate requirements
- Better able to respond to major infrastructure issues i.e. Heathrow, HS2, Department of Transport issues



Chiltern and South Bucks
Local Plan

Properties & Facilities Management

Benefits of new arrangements

- Improved Facilities Management service with call logging system for officers
- Improved room booking systems
- Increased depth of knowledge and cover for leave / absences
- Better use of technology / information management for easier access / sharing of information
- Increased capacity to manage work load through large team size in one location and increasing specialisation
- Improved project management systems / training to deliver projects on time
- Improved contract management that responds better to customer needs
- Clearer roles and responsibilities
- Single teams with increased capacity as one team in one place will increase resilience
- Improved training and system sharing with increased knowledge share and resilience
- Greater use of Data bases / CAD / Software with training increase officers skills and abilities
- Project management system / training increases resilience
- Shared service and framework contracts will increase scope and capacity to manage extended service areas
- Initial temp posts to cover implementation of support systems / processes to smooth transition and ensure staff can concentrate on their roles during this period

Policy, Performance & Communications

Benefits of new arrangements

- Increased depth of knowledge and cover for leave / absences
- Better use of technology / information management for easier access / sharing of information
- Increased capacity to manage work load through one team spread over both locations with increased specialisation
- Clearer roles and responsibilities
- Single team with increased capacity will increase resilience
- Improved training and system sharing with increased knowledge share and resilience

Human Resources

Benefits of new arrangements

- A partnering approach to working with services will ensure that HR focus is on the delivery of the Councils' objectives
- Improved support for managers and empower them to own HR matters
- Improved capacity to support organisational development
- A single and clear set of processes and procedures for customers to work with
- Improved self-service and customer access to information
- Improved management reporting on indicators, trends and risks
- Improved availability of the team
- More effective and resilient structure with clarity about roles and responsibilities
- Removal of waste from processes through more effective use and integration of systems and process improvement more generally
- Removal of single person dependencies and providing cover when staff are absent
- A clear link between strategic and operational service delivery

Environmental Health

Benefits of new arrangements

- Improve service quality to enable communities, residents and businesses to resolve their service requests at the first point of contact or close to the first time of asking
- The development of Lead Case Officers who would be responsible for managing and liaising with the customer (residents and businesses) and resolving more complex requests in a timely manner
- Effective and efficient regulatory services that meets customer needs identified through a Better Business initiative
- Improved opportunities to coach and mentor or train businesses to ensure legislative compliance
- Delivering services for other authorities
- Effective partnership working to protect and improve public health and environmental quality
- Partnership and community actions that mitigate the impact of climate change and support a reduction in carbon emissions and reduced costs
- Clear roles and responsibilities



Customer Services

Benefits of new arrangements

- A joint team delivering a consistent right first time service
- "Service Specialists" improving communication and liaison with Service Teams to reduce repeat contact and resolve enquiries at the first point of contact
- Consistent opening hours across both sites for both telephone and personal callers
- Improved self-service and customer access to information
- Improved management reporting on indicators, trends and risks
- Improved telephone response performance
- Service delivery to contract standard (CDC / Wycombe Joint Waste Contract)
- More effective and resilient structure with flexibility to address staff shortages at either location
- Better management of downtime through more effective use of resources
- Removal of single person dependencies and providing cover when staff are absent
- "Service Specialists" supporting and mentoring less experienced team members to increase capacity
- Less dependency on Service Teams and a reduction in double handling
- A better platform and stronger position to realise the benefits from the outcomes of future service reviews

Business Support



Benefits of new arrangements

- Providing one point of access to the service. Internal customers would have one service desk to manage all their IT requirements
- Staff would have the ability to monitor all support calls via the service desk portal on the intranet
- Support processes and procedures could be harmonised increasing capacity by generic working
- Technical lead officers would be freed up to concentrate on complex problems
- Pooling the application support staff would increase capacity reducing resolution times
- Pooling the application support staff would enhance skills transference also increasing capacity
- Creating a project management and support team within the service will not only provide the support internal customers need but also the opportunity to promote awareness of project management techniques based on PRINCE2 within both authorities
- Increased capacity to further develop a culture of good information management within both authorities and resource the administration of Freedom of Information and Data Protection requests
- Merging the in-house teams provides the opportunity to move to one network thereby simplifying the use of IT for the Councils service units and reduce overall costs for both authorities
- One team working generically with one set of processes and procedures would improve resilience because more officers would be able to provide support for a greater range of applications

Revenues and Benefits

Benefits of new arrangements

- Simpler processes for customers increasing opportunities for self service and so making the service more accessible e.g. E-claims form and risk based verification
- Increased support for customers through working with partners
- New communication channels e.g. SMS and E billing
- More dealt with at first point of contact reducing avoidable contact and delays for customers
- Improved quality and accuracy in decisions for customers, as a result of improved performance management and development of staff
- Improving processes by making them more efficient by removing waste and introducing automation where appropriate
- Increased capacity as efficiencies are delivered
- Reduced duplication and double handling and sharing tasks that are completed at both councils
- Develop capacity and skills to deliver intended service developments and react to future changes
- Improve resilience of client function at South Bucks by incorporating in a bigger team

Waste Management



Benefits of new arrangements

- Greater resilience and depth of cover for the services
- Dedicated new customer liaison officer specifically to address on-going unresolved repeat issues that need to be rectified
- Increase capacity to deal with issues that arise
- Ability to manage separate or combined waste collection contracts as opportunities / changes takes place
- Larger capacity to deal with escalated customer complaints from the initial customer service team contact and a greater focus on resolution with clear responsibility with the customer liaison officer to ensure issues are dealt with once and therefore failure demand is considerably reduced
- Combined projects team to push forward with further improvements with the services and look at new initiatives to create efficiencies
- Combining data management and thus reducing full time equivalents dealing with this matter
- Increased capacity overall in contract monitoring inspectors to be able to deal with specific issues as they arise in a particular Council area
- Ability to take out certain officers (subject to stable service delivery) to form part of dedicated procurement team for future contracts
- Greater resilience at contract management level for cover during leave or sickness for example
- Promoting best practice across all councils and shared learning to increase in efficiencies

Waste management ...continued

Benefits of new arrangements

- Aligning further systems and processes and beginning to consider with Member input aligning customer service standards to again make future procurement exercises easier
- Temporary IT project manager for nine months to specifically help align IT systems and introducing the same contract management interface system between the councils and the contractors
- Larger team would potentially increase staff opportunities for enhancement
- One team covering three Council areas would make the interface with the County Council slightly easier



Democratic Services

Benefits of new arrangements

- Consistency of advice and support to members, Management Team, senior officers and the ERO
- Increased depth of knowledge and cover for leave / absences
- Better use of technology / information management for easier access / sharing of information
- Increased capacity to manage work load through use of report management software and reducing duplication
- Clear roles and responsibilities
- Single manager to ensure cover for staff absences with staff working flexibly when required
- Improved training and system sharing will increased knowledge share and resilience
- Overview of investment costs
- Details of the investment required to facilitate the new joint team is detailed in the table below. Members will note that the costs are for new hardware (in the form of laptop pc's, docking stations and monitors)



Planning Services

Benefits of new arrangements

- Development Management culture
- Continuous improvement
- Customer self service
- Orientated to the customer
- Staff and team development
- Flexible use of staff resource
- Risk based approaches
- Best use of technology
- Paperless working and digitisation of information
- Mobile and flexible working
- Maximising income / commercial mind-set

