

EAST KENT (JOINT ARRANGEMENTS) COMMITTEE

25 JUNE 2008

Subject:	Proposal for the future development of the East Kent Cluster Shared Services Programme
Director/Head of Service:	Head of Policy and Improvement (Canterbury)
Decision Issues:	These matters are within the authority of the Joint Committee
Decision type:	Not applicable
Classification:	This report is open to the public.
Summary:	<i>This paper outlines the proposed arrangements for the future development of shared services across the East Kent.</i>
To Resolve:	That the guiding principles, project initiation process and the core programme for shared services projects are approved.
Next stage in process	To brief staff on what has been agreed and issue guidance to lead officers.

SUPPORTING INFORMATION**1. Introduction**

This report outlines the main conclusions drawn from with the joint management team workshop discussions on 20th May and further discussion at and the East Kent Leaders and Chief Executive's meeting on 21 May on the future development of shared services.

2. Detail**Guiding Principles**

It is proposed that the four district councils (Canterbury, Dover, Shepway and Thanet) will work together on a targeted set of shared services projects, all of which will be subject to the following guiding principles and ways of working:

- a) The geographic scope of all nominated projects will be East Kent as represented by the four District Councils present at the meeting
- b) Other Kent councils will be given the opportunity to be involved if the initial project analysis indicates that greater benefit will be derived from widening participation

- c) Projects will be divided into core and windfall. Core projects will be managed by the East Kent Joint Arrangements Committee and windfall will be managed by the Chief Execs
- d) Core projects will be resourced by the East Kent Joint Arrangements Committee (EKJAC) and a fighting fund will be established to support project initiation and delivery
- e) Core projects are defined as those which will deliver net benefit to East Kent as a whole and which are sufficiently complex to require additional focus from the EKJAC
- f) Net benefit is defined as one or more of the following:
 - a. Better services for residents
 - b. Financial gain
 - c. An improvement in resilience
 - d. An increase in capacity
- g) Net benefits will be shared across the Councils in a way that will need to be negotiated through predetermined agreement on a case by case basis, recognising that not all Councils will benefit to the same extent from an individual project
- h) Risks will also be shared between the Councils involved;
- i) Projects will be developed and executed in the spirit of partnership – which means that sufficient information needs to be available to progress through each stage rather than every possible permutation of risk/contingency/service level agreement etc.
- j) Projects will follow a set path from initiation to completion (see below for details)
- k) The development of joint shared services will require changes to working practice – much of which can not be predicted at this juncture. Consequently, projects will be developed in the spirit of exploration with frequent reviews to maximise learning and ensure success. The PLAN – DO – REVIEW loop will be adopted to enable this
- l) Legal and Financial advice will be provided by one Council on behalf of all for each project and should take appropriate steps to consult colleagues. As a working principal the legal and financial support will come from the Council which is leading the project on behalf of the group. This will be reviewed regularly to ensure that workload is evenly distributed and that an undue load isn't being placed on these functions within a single Council.

Project Initiation Process

The following process is proposed for the project initiation and is also set diagrammatically in Annex A:

- i) Before a project is initiated the nominated project lead will produce a summary document (statement of intent) which will outline proposed scope; likely benefits; likely resource requirements

- ii) This will be submitted to each Council's CMT for review; and then East Kent Forum for approval. If approved, the project lead will be asked to prepare a business case.
- iii) The Business case will be submitted to each Council's CMT and then to East Kent Forum and then on to EKJAC for approval. If approved, at this point money may be released from the fighting fund to ensure the necessary information can be collected swiftly
- iv) The business case will then be endorsed by the Executive/Cabinets and/or then Full Council
- v) Once the Business case is endorsed any necessary project management resource will be secured to ensure that the project meets agreed deadlines and is robustly managed
- vi) As several of the projects will require several years to deliver the Joint Committee will receive regular updates on progress

The proposed template setting out the questions to be addressed at the statement of intent and business case stages is attached at Annex B.

Measuring Success

The overall aim of the programme will be that within three years there will be a broad scale use of shared services which have delivered proven benefits. To achieve this aim the following will be needed:

- a shared vision of what we want to achieve
- a shared set of behaviours (see below)
- a clear sense of identity for East Kent (this may be for staff rather than residents; this needs to be decided)
- support from Members for shared services as a mechanism for improving services
- a philosophy of future proofing running throughout the projects as many will be delivered over a number of years and we need to ensure we don't disable other initiatives when delivering these
- a mutually agreed process for managing shared service projects
- proof that shared services deliver benefit for East Kent as a whole
- to deliver!

Critical behaviours:

- we act in the interests of East Kent whilst acknowledging the sovereignty of each of the individual councils
- we focus on delivering long term gain for East Kent residents
- we make the process as transparent as possible to members, staff and residents

- we act as a critical friend to each other and constructively challenge in order to achieve the best possible outcome
- once a project has been approved we work in a unified way and set aside any individual views about the merits of a particular project
- we focus on success and take individual and collective responsibility for delivering each project
- We will focus on finding solutions when the project goes off track
- we believe that everyone is working with the best of intentions all of the time and demonstrate this through a “no blame” approach to projects

The Core Programme

It is proposed that the following services are included in the core programme:

- A) Waste Collection (as part of waste management) – led by John Bunnett
- B) Management of Housing Stock (including Ashford)– led by Brendan Ryan
- C) Revenues– led by Sue McGonigal *
- D) Benefits – led by Andrew Stevens *
- E) HR and payroll – led by Jim McDonald
- F) Call centre and 1st point of contact – led by Cathy Eastwood
- G) ICT – lead tbc
- H) Building Control (possibly including Ashford) – Mike Dawson/David Reed
- I) Leisure Trusts – led by Roger Walton *
- J) Coastal defence work – led by Ted Edwards

** Position to be clarified by each of the councils*

3. Relevant Council Documents

The four East Kent District Councils joint working protocol. They and the County Council have also signed up to the Kent Commitment to be applied to this Joint Committee on the current two tier arrangements.

4. Consultation planned or undertaken

The proposals set out in this paper have been developed through consultation with each of the councils including the joint management team meeting on 20th May and the Leaders and Chief Executive’s meeting on 21st May.

5. Options available with reasons for suitability

Members are asked to either approve the recommendations as set out in the report or amend as appropriate.

6. Reasons for supporting option recommended, with risk assessment

It is important that the process for initiating shared services is agreed upon at an early stage in order to get the programme of shared services projects underway.

7. Implications

Financial implications – none directly arising from this report.

Legal implications – none directly arising from this report

8. Conclusions

The proposed arrangements set out in the report provide a sound basis upon which EKJAC can commence work on the programme of shared services projects.

9. Background Papers

None

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ANNEX A – Process map for project initiation

ANNEX B – Template for stage 1 (statement of intent) and Stage 2 (business case)