

HUNTINGDONSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

Title/Subject Matter:	Shared Services' 2018/19 Annual Report
Meeting/Date:	Cabinet – 18th July 2019
Executive Portfolio:	Executive Councillor for Digital & Customers, Councillor Darren Tysoe
Report by:	Corporate Director – Services, Oliver Morley
Wards affected:	All

Executive Summary:

The attached Annual Report refers to the progress that has been made over the last year by the 3C ICT, Legal and Building Control shared services against the 2017/18 Business Plans in terms of their financial and service performance. It also covers customer satisfaction and work to deliver on development projects.

Shared Services are overseen by a Management Board (containing the lead directors from each authority). The governance structure also features a Chief Executives' Board and an overarching group comprising the Leaders of each of the Councils.

The 2018/19 Annual Report requires the approval of all three partners. It is therefore recommended that the Cabinet delegate authority to the Shared Service Management Board to agree final amendments to the Annual Report in line with comments received from all partner committees.

Recommendations:

Cabinet is recommended:

- 1) To endorse the Shared Service Annual Report for 2018/19 attached at Appendix 1
- 2) To delegate authority to the Shared Service Management Board to agree any final amendments to the Annual Report in line with comments received from all three individual partner Councils

1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

1.1 To endorse the 2018/19 Annual Report for the Shared Services.

2. BACKGROUND

2.1. South Cambridgeshire District Council, Cambridge City Council and Huntingdonshire District Council commenced sharing Legal, Building Control and ICT Services in October 2015 (known as 3C Shared Services). The shared services are based upon a “lead authority model” where an agreed lead Council is responsible for the operational delivery of the service. The formal partnership agreement between the authorities, signed in June 2016, contains a requirement that an Annual Report is prepared on the services’ activities and performance. The 3C Shared Services Annual Report, at **Appendix 1**, sets out the context for the operation of each of the shared services with a summary of performance against the approved business plan.

2.2. The partner councils have agreed that the achievement of the following outcomes is the primary objective of sharing services:

- 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

2.3 A key objective for each of the services is the development of a set of forward-looking business plans that set out the key priorities, objectives, activities and measures of success for each service. The plans for 2019/20 were presented and formally approved by the three councils in spring 2019, and their reception recognised the progress that had been made over the previous 12 months.

2.4 The Annual Report has been consulted on with lead Members at each of the Councils. Their role is to provide advice and oversight, to challenge and recommend for endorsement the shared service business plan and budgets.

2.5 Annual Reports have to be endorsed by the partners’ individual Executives. It is therefore recommended that the Shared Service Management Board is authorised to agree any final amendments to the Annual Report in line with comments received from all partners.

2.6 The Shared Services Partnership Agreement requires the parties to “engage in discussions” to agree whether to extend the term of the Agreement beyond the expiry date of 30 September 2020 – and provides that this engagement should commence by “no later than the fourth anniversary of the commencement date” [on 1 October 2015], thus by no later than 30 September 2019. The parties may, by written agreement, extend the term for a further period of twelve months or such other period as may be agreed in writing. There is no limit on the number of times that the parties may by written agreement extend the term. Further reports will be submitted to Members as required.

3. COMMENTS OF OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY

- 3.1 The Panel received the Shared Services' 2018/19 Annual Report at its meeting on 9th July 2019.
- 3.2 One Member recognised how hard Officers have worked in modernising the Shared Services.
- 3.3 A Member sought reassurance that the Public Services Network (PSN), Environmental Health System Procurement and the Waste Services Implementation projects were complete. The Panel was informed that all three Councils are now PSN compliant. In regards to the procurement, that project is not complete but there is a preferred supplier. The Waste Services Implementation is currently on hold until a new solution is found.
- 3.4 Concern was raised that the Building Control service could do more in securing new business. In response, the Panel was informed that one of the key objectives for building control is market share and that officers are working hard in securing a greater share of the market.
- 3.5 A Member questioned if something could be done in acquiring Lexcel accreditation for Legal. It was highlighted that the issue was that accreditation would only be given to a single organisation, therefore there would have to be three lots of accreditation and the cost of that is prohibitive. What the service has done to mitigate this is seek alternative opportunities to win work from other authorities, this has included positioning themselves to make use of the emerging Local Government Association trading platform that would enable us to trade with others.
- 3.6 It was recognised by Members that the partner organisations have had further to progress in the modernisation of their services but were reassured that there is a general appreciation of the shared services and that the Council is likely to look to proceed with the arrangement.
- 3.7 The Panel supports the recommendations as outlined within the Cabinet report.

4. WHAT ACTIONS WILL BE TAKEN/TIMETABLE FOR IMPLEMENTATION

- 4.1 The Head of each shared service is ultimately responsible for the overall operation of that service. Any feedback on the Annual Report will be fed into them to inform the delivery of the service and how it operates.
- 4.2 The recommendation set out is to delegate authority to the Shared Service Management Board to agree final amendments to the Annual Report in line with comments received from all three individual partner Councils.

5. LINK TO THE CORPORATE PLAN

- 5.1 The recommendations relate to the corporate objective 'to become more business-like and efficient in the way we deliver services'.

6. CONSULTATION

- 6.1 Significant consultation with staff, Unions and Staff Council took place during the establishment of the Shared Services.

7. IMPLICATIONS

7.1 There are no significant implications.

8. LIST OF APPENDICES INCLUDED

Appendix 1 – Shared Service 2018/19 Annual Report

BACKGROUND PAPERS

No background papers were relied upon in writing this report.

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