

Gloucester City Council

Meeting:	Overview & Scrutiny Committee	Date: 15 June 2015
	Cabinet	17 June 2015
Subject:	Partnership working with Gloucestershire County Council	
Report Of:	Cabinet Member for Performance & Resources	
Wards Affected:	All	
Key Decision:	No	Budget/Policy Framework: No
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Appendices:	1. High Level Implementation plan (Exempt) 2. Memorandum of Understanding 3. AMEO action Plan	

EXEMPTIONS

The public are likely to be excluded during consideration of part of the report as Appendix 1 contains information as defined in Paragraph 4 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended).

1.0 Purpose of Report

- 1.1 To inform Members of the progress made in discussions between Gloucester City Council (GCC) and Gloucestershire County Council (GlosCC) to work together to deliver back office functions and appropriate frontline customer services for the benefit of the residents of the City.
- 1.2 To seek authority to continue to develop the high level implementation plan regarding partnership working and the potential for shared services and outsourcing, with each case being reviewed on its merits and reports being brought to Cabinet for endorsement.

2.0 Recommendations

- 2.1 Overview & Scrutiny Committee is asked to note the report and to make any recommendations to Cabinet for consideration.
- 2.2 Cabinet is asked to **RESOLVE**, subject to consideration of the recommendations from Overview & Scrutiny Committee:
 - (1) To agree the High Level Implementation Plan in Appendix 1 which considers services which may be delivered by Gloucestershire County Council on behalf of the Council and those services which may be commissioned by Gloucestershire County Council from the Council

- (2) To approve the action plan in Appendix 3 and to authorise the Director of Services & Neighbourhoods to adjust the dates as appropriate in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Performance & Resources.
- (3) That further reports be submitted to Cabinet in respect of each service, on a case by case basis, for consideration and approval as appropriate.

3.0 Background and Key Issues

- 3.1 Members will recall that on 20th November 2014 Council took the decision to appoint a joint Managing Director (MD) and Commissioning Director in partnership with GlosCC to work at the highest levels in both organisations to provide a stronger focus on delivering services for the residents of the city.
- 3.2 Prior to this, officers had been working well with colleagues at GlosCC and a number of partnerships were being developed which addressed resource shortages at the GCC and expanded on existing partnerships within the County.
- 3.3 Since the end of 2014, formal partnerships with GlosCC have been implemented in Communications & Press Management and Audit, and a shared HR service is currently being developed as detailed in a separate report to Cabinet.
- 3.4 In addition, GlosCC have supported GCC with; IT recruitment and contract management; management of the Economic Development service; and in the development of large scale Regeneration plans.
- 3.5 The purpose of this report is to bring Members up to date with the partnership work done so far and to seek endorsement for continuation of the joint working approach at both strategic and operational deliver levels.
- 3.6 Governance arrangements in relation to the joint MD and Commissioning Director role will be dealt with outside of this report as meetings are being scheduled with the 6 Group Leaders (across GCC and GlosCC), Jon McGinty and Pete Bungard and these will be reported to Members once arrangements have been finalised.
- 3.7 The High Level Implementation Plan at Appendix 1 highlights the areas of service 'within scope' and as Members will see this includes services that GCC can provide for GlosCC in relation to customer engagement and other front-line customer services.
- 3.8 The scope of the partnership working ranges from officer advice and support to full scale transfer of service delivery with each case being reviewed on its merits through the production of an appropriate business case and signed agreement.
- 3.9 Members should be clear that this approach is about improving services for residents through more effective delivery mechanisms including improved and integrated IT and other communication methods. It also strengthens the reputations of both Councils as residents will have access to a wide range of services without the need to be 'passed from pillar to post'.

- 3.10 It should be recognised that delivery of the High Level Implementation Plan is an ambitious project which will require time and resources to deliver. However, the outcomes will be far reaching in terms of organisational change, removing blockages and using resources more effectively to meet the needs of our residents.
- 3.11 The High Level Implementation Plan will be prioritised based on; impact, outcomes, quick wins, cost and time resources.

4.0 Alternative Options Considered

- 4.1 Members could decide to 'do nothing' and continue operating in isolation of other Councils or partnerships. However, GCC has already entered into a number of successful partnerships that have proven to be cost effective, more efficient and provide better outcomes for customers. Examples include 'One Legal', Civica and the forthcoming shared Building Control service with Stroud.
- 4.2 As Members will see in the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) at Appendix 2, GCC and GlosCC have committed to working together to improve service delivery. However, the MoU has been worded to allow both organisations to consider other suitable partnerships if collaboration with different organisations would be for the good of that Council.

5.0 Reasons for Recommendations

- 5.1 As can be seen from the appended documents there is much to be gained from working in partnership with other councils and organisations. GCC has a track record of innovative working and regularly reviews the best delivery method for its services. The recent stock transfer to Gloucester City Homes and the outsourcing of streetcare and leisure services to a private contractor and Leisure & Cultural Trust are further evidence that no 'one size fits all' approach is viable in today's world.
- 5.2 The exploration of partnership working across back office services is a natural continuation of this approach and the inclusion of front line customer services allows GCC to showcase its strength in customer engagement and community involvement which should see services and resources being directed through the City Council into our communities.

6.0 Future Work and Conclusions

- 6.1 There is still a significant amount of work to be done and the action plan produced by AMEO in appendix 3 will help us shape how we review and prioritise services which would be suitable for inclusion in the programme.
- 6.2 Further reports will be scheduled for consideration by Members as the programme progresses.

7.0 Financial Implications

- 7.1 There are no immediate financial implications associated with this report. Any decision to consider outsourcing of services or delivering services on behalf of GlosCC or any other delivery model would be subject to the approval of an

appropriate business case and a further report to Cabinet which would include financial implications.

- 7.2 GlosCC have offered to cover the first 20 days of any work undertaken by AMEO.
(Financial Services have been consulted in the preparation this report.)

8.0 Legal Implications

- 8.1 There are no immediate legal implications associated with this report. Any decision to consider shared services, outsourcing of services, delivering services on behalf of GlosCC or any other delivery model would be subject to the approval of an appropriate business case and a further report to Cabinet which would include legal implications.

(Legal Services have been consulted in the preparation this report.)

9.0 Risk & Opportunity Management Implications

- 9.1 There is a risk that Members and Officers do not support the proposals within this report or do not actively look to move the programme forward with pace and enthusiasm.
- 9.2 Opportunities will arise from good communications that explain the benefits to Members, customers and staff to ensure that everyone is engaged in the project and can see the direction of travel and the end benefits.

10.0 People Impact Assessment (PIA):

- 10.1 The PIA Screening Stage was completed and did not identify any potential or actual negative impact, therefore a full PIA was not required. Individual PIA's will be completed for each project brought forward.

11.0 Other Corporate Implications

Community Safety

- 11.1 The work around community engagement will re-enforce the ABCD approach adopted by GCC to build safer and stronger communities.

Sustainability

- 11.2 Implementation of the project will help sustain both Councils as efficiencies come forward through the use of improved technology and closer working relationships.

Staffing & Trade Union

- 11.3 Staff and Trade Unions are being briefed on a regular basis so that everyone knows about the proposed programme of partnership working.

Background Documents: None