

MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING
Between
Gloucestershire County Council
And
Gloucester City Council

Purpose and Scope

To agree and implement a programme which will look at all back office services and appropriate frontline customer services being delivered by Gloucestershire County Council on behalf of Gloucester City Council. As part of the programme, consideration will also be given to exploring and implementing those areas of the business that Gloucestershire County Council could commission from Gloucester City Council or assist the City Council in delivering objectives within its Council Plan.

By exception, it is agreed that where both sides recognise that greater value can be achieved through Gloucester City Council commissioning a back office service from another partner, a joint decision will be taken to progress with this option, although the final decision will rest with Gloucester City Council's Cabinet.

All back office service areas are within scope, those currently being considered are:- Audit, Asset Management and Property Services, Human Resources, Finance Admin functions, ICT, and Communications. Areas being considered for possible commissioning include; community engagement and arrangements relating to the Highways / Street care Contracts.

The Authorities acknowledge that it is not their intention for this Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to have a binding legal effect. It is a statement of their shared intention to work together in a spirit of co-operation and will provide a shared understanding of the approach to developing and implementing the programme.

Objectives

The overriding goal is to fully optimise inter-organisational opportunities and deliver efficiencies through sharing services. A clear objective is that, where appropriate, Gloucester City Council's back office services will no longer directly be provided by the City Council upon completion of the programme. All other services will be considered and prioritised and reviewed as part of the programme.

Background

The two councils have long-established collaborative working arrangements focussed on delivering effective, value for money services for their customers. Both organisations have implemented transformational changes within their own structures, challenging the status quo and adopting new ways of working. A joint Managing Director of the City Council and Strategic Joint Commissioning Director for the County Council has been appointed who will further enhance and embed joint working. As part of the development of this joint appointment, it was identified that opportunities for joint working should be implemented through a programme to rationalise and share back office service delivery.

Roles and responsibilities

Each partner will:

1. Identify priority services for inclusion in the programme
2. Agree a timetable to implement the programme
3. Keep confidential any matters which any party reasonably considers in its own interest to be kept from the public
4. Provide all required information to the project team¹ to assist in developing and delivering the programme
5. Provide input in a timely and consistent manner and keep each other advised of any significant financial or political changes which may affect the plan
6. Agree to meet at appropriate intervals to monitor progress and to make timely decisions on matters which affect the programme
7. If committee approval to any aspect of the programme is required, each party will agree to share draft reports and provide constructive input
8. All external communications will be mutually agreed before transmission
9. Any disagreements between parties on any aspect of the programme are to be mutually decided by the nominated Lead Officers, each acting reasonably.

Financial Commitment

Both Councils agree to jointly fund any project management resources that need to be committed over and above the existing resources of both Councils. Any project manager will act in the best interests of both council's and in a neutral capacity. The level of funding is to be agreed prior to any appointment into the role.

Review and Evaluation

The programme will contain a number of projects related to developing shared working arrangements between the City and County. The progress of these projects will be monitored and evaluated by the agreed Lead Officers and management teams of the councils.

Term of Agreement

The MoU will remain in place for the period until the programme has successfully achieved its objectives.

Authorisation

The MoU is not a legal undertaking. The signatories will abide by these terms to meet the objectives stated in the MoU, by striving to do their best.

Gloucestershire County Council

Gloucester City Council

¹ All info shared to be treated confidentially and only used toward the successful delivery of the programme.