



Ward: N/A

## High Level Business Cases – Strategic Update

### Report by the Chief Executive

#### 1.0 Purpose of Report

- 1.1 Following the preparation by Executive Heads of Service of the first batch of high level business cases and their consideration by officer working groups, a number of common issues have arisen. It is appropriate to summarise some of these early findings to help members in their reading of the reports to follow on this agenda.
- 1.2 It is important also to acknowledge the substantial time and effort that has gone into each of the reports, particularly challenging during the main summer holiday period.

#### 2.0 External Funding

- 2.1 The additional funding that has been promised from Improvement and Efficiency South East (IESE) has been formally agreed. Following the signature of the Memorandum of Understanding, £90,000, which includes project support staff over the next two years, has been allocated to the Adur/Worthing project. This allocation is in recognition of the important status of the Adur/Worthing initiative as an example of innovation and corporate transformation that is of regional and national significance.

#### 3.0 Main Strategic Issues

- 3.1 It is clear from reading and discussion of the business cases that we have had before us to date, that there are some major issues that will require separate or priority treatment to implement service reviews in the months and years ahead. Set out below under a number of sub headings are a few high level comments about each of them:-

**ICT, systems and telephony** – The business cases to date confirm our expectation that a common ICT base is vital to the business transformation model. Some progress can be made in the short term. However, it places a real priority on resolving CenSus membership and our joint approaches to document management systems (EDRMS). This is achievable within a strong existing partnership.

**Accommodation, including storage** – Discussion held prior to their preparation and within the business cases themselves, demonstrate the importance of functions being co-located wherever possible. In a sense this relatively obvious point aims to reproduce the resilience, critical mass and economies that were behind the start of this exercise. Naturally, it can mean a degree of disruption for any staff that need to move. However, the reports later in this agenda demonstrate that with creativity and common business systems, that under a single management regime, this can be achieved.

Another key issue that arises from the accommodation discussion is the question of storage, particularly in respect of the degree to which we can scan historical files so that they become part of our EDRMS infrastructure. This can unlock substantial levels of accommodation.

**Service Delivery** – As we explore the content of each of the business cases on this agenda and on others to come, the issue of service access or service delivery points will emerge in many of them. The examples on this agenda demonstrate how important it is to consider them in a transformational environment and not solely within the limits of the way they have been provided in this past. Again this links into business systems, electronic services and telephony, which in the recent past has become of growing significance in delivering services directly via the telephone keypad (making payments, car tax, utilities etc.).

**Staff development/succession planning** – Over the next 2-3 years the partnership process will generate significant change for a number of key staff in various sections. When combined with the age structure of the existing management structure it is clear that the councils face some turnover in key positions. Therefore, steps are under discussion to start some ‘light touch’ development with relevant staff to make them ready for changes ahead, and with the skills to prepare them to work at more senior levels.

#### **4.0 Other Factors to be considered**

- 4.1 Arising from some of the sub headings above it is important for members to look beyond each of these service by service analyses. It can be misleading to look at any service on its own unless we are thinking about the wider potential for transformational approaches. For example, it may well be sensible to place on hold major decisions on accommodation until we have got a feel for the accommodation demands arising from each of the business cases? The same factors could apply to ICT solutions.
- 4.2 As these early documents have been discussed during their preparation it is probably important to remember that the use of the phrase “service reviews” which will follow the completion of the business cases does not simply imply another round of reports. Naturally, there will need to be further reports and discussions with members, however, they will be focused on implementing the changes, delivering the savings and not just providing further analysis.
- 4.3 The reports included in this agenda may not, at face value, appear to be very radical. However, the scale of savings identified, the business transformations, use of new business systems and integration of staff resources in practice represent a

very different organisational approach in an existing two-tier local government context.

## **5.0 Direction of Travel?**

- 5.1 One obvious question a reading of these papers might imply is what they tell us about the prospects for savings and transformation from the totality of the exercise we are embarked upon.
- 5.2 The first thing to say is that the proposals by Financial Services and Legal and Democratic Services to get staff together in the short term are important for all the reviews, as they are so instrumental to what the others can achieve.
- 5.3 Secondly, the confident level of savings predicted and business transformations suggested is again a positive indicator. However, there is clearly some way to go on the practicalities, particularly on ICT.
- 5.4 Finally, if there is an emerging pattern at this early stage, it might seem that two phases can be contemplated:-

### **Phase 1 (year 1?)**

- Initial savings from creating shared teams, sometimes on an interim basis and reduced management requirement. In many respects this reproduces the steps taken to streamline the senior management levels within other sections.
- Key decisions on approach to ICT, telephony, service access
- Self-contained accommodation moves and investment in systems

### **Phase 2 (year 2?)**

- Service transformation, improvement & structural efficiencies
- Consolidated salaries and terms and conditions
- More substantial accommodation changes

- 5.5 It should of course be emphasised that this is a very early assessment of what the business cases to date suggest. There is some way to go, and of course, events, such as weather-related incidents, the economy or unexpected maintenance issues with buildings etc can change our options.

## **6.0 Conclusion**

- 6.1 It is hoped that Members will find some of these early observations helpful in their reading and discussion of the business cases on this agenda and to follow at future meetings.
- 6.2 Naturally, future business cases will add further evidence about the lessons they provide about future prospects. They will be summarised in future agendas as they progress.

**Local Government Act 1972  
Background Papers:**

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## **Schedule of other matters**

### **1.0 Council Priority**

1.1 The report contributes to the councils' effectiveness in delivering all priorities. However, the main contribution will be to the efficiency of the organisation.

### **2.0 Specific Action Plans**

2.1 As above.

### **3.0 Sustainability Issues**

3.1 Relevant to sustainability of the organisation in making best use of resources, but otherwise not relevant.

### **4.0 Equality Issues**

4.1 No issues.

### **5.0 Community Safety issues (Section 17)**

5.1 No issues.

### **6.0 Human Rights Issues**

6.1 No issues.

### **7.0 Reputation**

7.1 Continuing delivery of the Worthing/Adur partnership is a major factor in the reputation of both councils.

### **8.0 Consultations**

8.1 (A) Relevant Executive Heads of Service, Directors, IESE, Adur/Worthing Partnership Board.

8.2 (B) Need for report discussed at meeting of Partnership Board and broad content agreed.

### **9.0 Risk assessment**

9.1 Strategic report. Risk assessments covered in individual business cases.

### **10.0 Health & Safety Issues**

10.1 None.

### **11.0 Procurement Strategy**

11.1 Not relevant.

**12.0 Partnership working**

12.1 Covered in details as the core content of the report.