

WAVERLEY BOROUGH COUNCIL

EXECUTIVE – 1ST JUNE 2011

Title:

**ICT – JOINT WORKING BETWEEN WAVERLEY AND
GUILDFORD BOROUGH COUNCILS
A JOINT REPORT TO THE EXECUTIVES OF GUILDFORD & WAVERLEY
[Portfolio Holder: Cllr Stephen O’Grady]
[Wards Affected: All]**

Summary and purpose:

This report sets areas of proposed collaborative and shared working in the IT area between Waverley and Guildford Borough Councils. The report is being considered by both of the Council’s Executives.

How this report relates to the Council’s Corporate Priorities:

This report relates to the Council’s priorities of value for money and customer focused services.

Equality and Diversity Implications:

There are no equality and diversity implications.

Climate Change Implications:

There are no climate change implications.

Resource/Value for Money implications:

There are no direct resource implications arising from this particular report however one of the main objectives of developing a collaborative approach to IT would be the potential for obtaining efficiencies and cost savings.

Legal Implications:

There are no specific legal implications at this stage.

Background

1. A preliminary meeting of the IT Portfolio Holders from Guildford and Waverley, accompanied by senior officers from both authorities, took place last year at which it was agreed that a joint report should be presented to both authorities outlining opportunities for potential collaborative working in ICT that would be beneficial to both authorities.

2. The provision of ICT is an integral part of how both authorities deliver their services. While it is clear that it is for line-of-business services to take the lead in shared or collaborative working such as planning, housing, finance, benefits, environmental services, there is a key role for IT services to facilitate and identify the technological opportunities and to provide an infrastructure between authorities that would lead to the delivery of efficiencies and cost benefits that joint working should achieve.
3. Besides the physical proximity of the two Councils there are many similarities between the two authorities in terms of core service provision and both authorities are similar in having retained their Housing stock. The two Councils are already collaborating on the provision of legal services, care and repair services (home improvements), Home Choice, Careline (emergency communications service) and from April 2011 Guildford will be providing on-street parking enforcement in Waverley on behalf of Surrey County Council.
4. The two authorities are not seeking to exclude any other current or future partnership working with any other organisation but rather to capitalise on a shared approach where there is a real business case for both to do so.
5. In terms of ICT infrastructure both Guildford and Waverley are part of a Virgin high speed network communications channel which could be utilised to facilitate the exchange of information and for hosted services between the authorities. Major business systems in both authorities such as Housing (Orchard), Council Tax and Benefits (Civica) are being provided using the same software product.

Proposed way forward

6. The approach proposed by the Heads of IT at Guildford and Waverley is to examine specific opportunities for joint or shared working and to assess the benefits that could arise from closer collaboration between the authorities. The following workstreams for the next 12 months have been identified for possible consideration:
 - a. Common business (software) applications - opportunities for alignment and standardisation – e.g. Civica and Orchard;
 - b. Potential for operating a shared Service Desk function;
 - c. Collaboration on the development of flexible working solutions;
 - d. Scanning and printing facilities;
 - e. Server and desktop virtualisation;
 - f. Standardising IT Policies and Procedures where appropriate;
 - g. IT staff skills sharing;
 - h. Microsoft sharepoint development
 - i. Telecommunications
 - j. GIS/NLPG
 - k. Microsoft Exchange and associated e-mail services
7. Each of the areas identified above would be established as a separate project with one or other authority taking the lead and reporting back to a joint board comprising of the two authorities' IT Portfolio Holders and the relevant

Strategic Directors. Any proposals that emerge would be jointly reported to both Executives for approval.

Recommendation

It is recommended that the programme of work for potential IT collaboration between Guildford and Waverley, as set out above, be approved.

Background Papers

There are no background papers (as defined by Section 100D(5) of the Local Government Act 1972) relating to this report.

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