

Joint working between Dartford and Sevenoaks Councils in Environmental Health – Draft Business Case



Walklates

Optimising your people process and Systems

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1. Purpose of Project

Members and senior officers in both Dartford and Sevenoaks have a commitment to shared services as a response to the pressing need to reduce costs and continue delivering quality services.

In line with this strategic commitment the Councils have been exploring options around sharing services in Environmental Health since September 2009. This project formally commenced in August 2010 with the aim of assessing the feasibility of, and the opportunities for, joint working in the Environmental Health service.

At the commencement of this project, the stated objective was **to establish savings and identify a route towards sharing Environmental Health services between Sevenoaks and Dartford Councils.**

It was determined that the outcome of such a shared service should include:

- Cashable savings
- Improved resilience
- High customer satisfaction
- High service efficiency and quality

2. Project Approach

2.1 Core Themes

Many shared service projects start with the mapping of processes or the determination of the business logic for the delivery of transactional services. The approach to this feasibility study took a somewhat different approach in that much greater emphasis was placed on creating a strong and sustainable partnership that allowed for the adoption of good practice already in place at both Councils. Therefore, for this project, the core themes were:

1. **Consensus** - finding common ground between the two Councils
2. **Challenge** - ensuring those involved were robust in challenging opinions and the scope of what is achievable.

It was recognised at an early stage that the long term success of the project is very much dependent on the staff within the service. It was therefore essential that the approach to this project was one that allowed for high levels of consultation, involvement and engagement of staff, who would be given sufficient opportunity to input and shape the future service.

2.2 Overall Process

Walklates applied a robust process that had been tried and tested in feasibility studies for similar shared working arrangements at Sevenoaks and Dartford (Revenues and Benefits Project), AGMA (Greater Manchester Authorities), WEP (West of England Partnership) and partnerships in Staffordshire and North Wales. The Project also benefited from early expert Environmental Health knowledge provided by Price Mariner Consultants.

The process identified the local requirements of the two Councils, based upon research and analysis with key stakeholders, and applied them to determine the best way forward in operational areas that are critical to success. The key steps were:

1. To identify the potential opportunities for shared working, taking account of good practice developments, both nationally and regionally, that are relevant in the local scenario
2. To objectively determine key criteria, based on local service requirements, by which delivery options can be evaluated
3. To rigorously review all of the options using agreed criteria and determine the most suitable model for joint working.

Once the preferred model had been defined in broad terms, the most effective operational model, was determined covering the main components of people, process, systems and support services. Walklates worked together with the project team, project board and relevant professionals (Human Resources, Accountancy, Legal, Customer Services and IT) to clearly describe each of the key components in turn and how they combined to produce the operational model. This definition of revised service operation was then translated into projected operating costs and these were compared with current costs to determine potential savings.

The robustness of this process was enabled by the consultant's substantial knowledge and experience of similar shared working projects across the UK. This input provided a continuous and effective source of challenge.

Overall, the process is designed to produce the right result in the context of defined requirements. Most importantly, the approach is highly inclusive allowing for greater buy-in and

ownership. This has extended to stakeholders, especially those who will be at the heart of implementing the shared service model being actively involved in the process of selection and implementation.

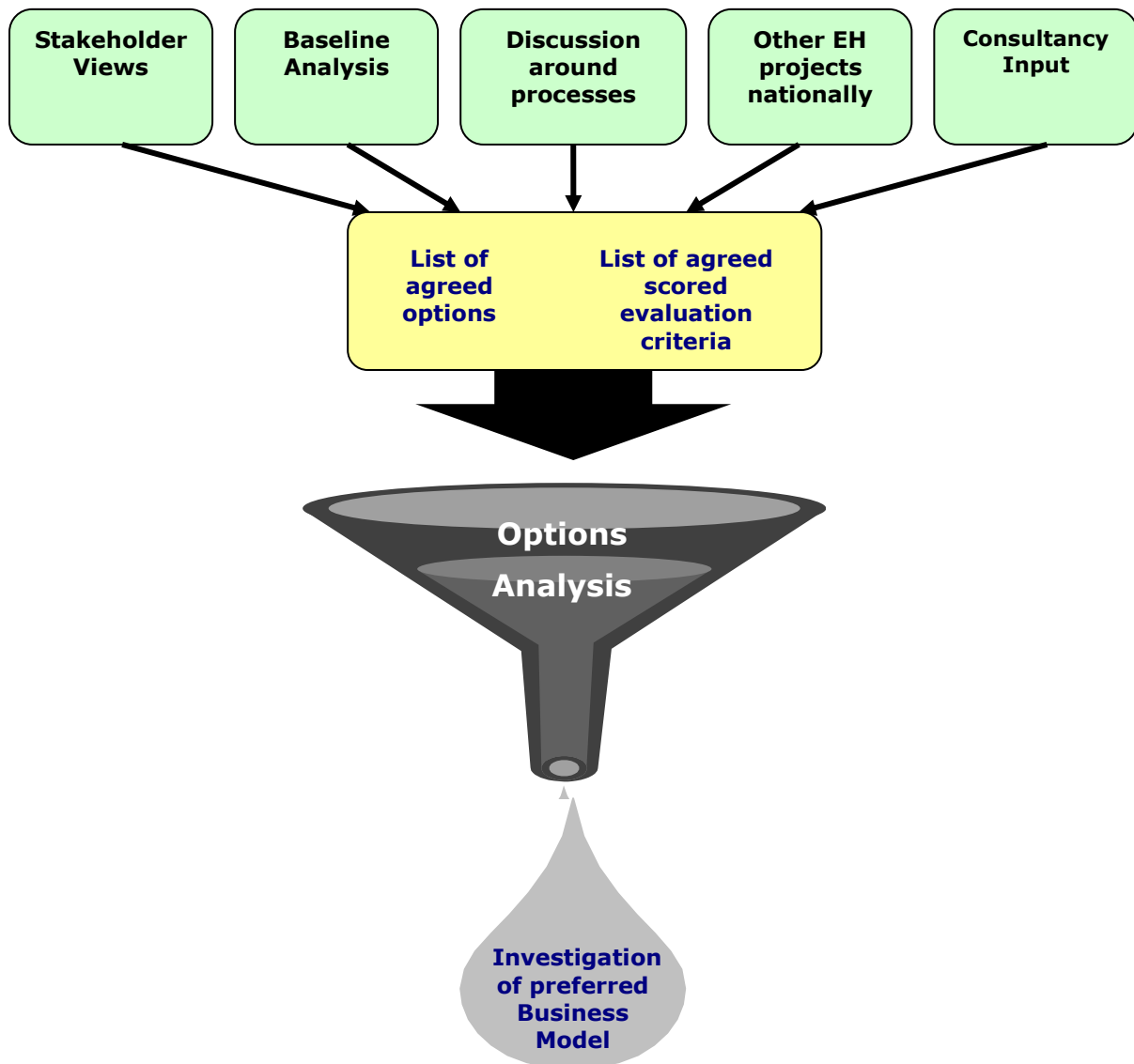
2.3 Methodology

The purpose of the project was to evaluate defined options for joint working against preferred criteria to determine a single, preferred model for shared working.

The principle components of our approach were:

- **Stakeholder views** – to understand the starting positions, preferences, and concerns of all key stakeholders (included Members, managers and staff)
- **Baseline Analysis** – to understand current finances, volumetrics in order to establish the starting point for both Councils
- **Discussions around Process** – to understand current working processes employed and assess the complexity of bringing the two teams together as well as potential for economies of scale or process improvement
- **Other EH projects nationally** – to understand how other Local Authorities have shared Environmental Health Services and to learn from these projects
- **Consultancy Input** – to provide challenge, methodology and experience from similar projects in Local Government
- **Options** – to develop a number of possible ways in which the two Councils could come together in a shared working arrangement
- **Criteria** – to develop a simple list of criteria the two Councils would use for the evaluation of options
- **Options analysis** – to use the options and criteria to decide a preferred operating model that would be the subject of detailed evaluation in Phase 2.

Project Summary Diagram



The above analysis was undertaken by a team of officers from both authorities on 13th July 2011. It was agreed that any shared service model would need to meet the following **Evaluation Criteria**:

1. Capable of fulfilling statutory obligations
2. £300K savings capable of full implementation by 2012/13
3. Improve capacity and resilience compared with making the same cuts in the two individual services
4. Ability to meet agreed service standards
5. Must have a single professional EH manager reporting to Head of Service/ Director
6. £60k savings from 2015/16 by trading, sharing with a third party or further savings
7. Ability for customers to access services to be the same or better than current

The following **Options** were selected for evaluation:

1. Seek to join an existing Shared Service arrangement locally or further afield
2. Fragmentation of the service across other departments
3. Outsource
4. Partial Outsource
5. **Combine the existing services across a single site**
6. **Combine the existing service across two sites**
7. Staying the same and making savings from existing services

Having regard to the criteria, and detailed scoring, options 5 and 6 (in bold above) were identified as the most appropriate. It was considered that the likely success of the project would be enhanced by devoting available resources to the thorough design and testing of the model most likely to achieve objectives of both Councils – rather than spreading the Councils limited resources over a number of options.

Further work was undertaken by the Project Team and Project Board working with the consultant, which ultimately led to the selection of a preferred option as follows:

Office located in Dartford with a satellite office in Sevenoaks consisting of hot desks for officers working in the area and a regular management presence. The main elements of the chosen model are:

- All staff would have a desk at main office and undertake work in both council areas
- 8 Hot desks at satellite office (1 manager and 7 staff desks) staff will work from the satellite office as required by managers and in line with the business requirements
- Assumption that staff will be out in the field wherever possible
- Management of outcomes and increasing autonomy
- Management presence at the satellite office at least 1 day per week
- EP attendance at Police briefings at SDC
- Provision for home working on a volunteer basis

Project Team and Project Board rationale for choice of model:

- Resilience of all staff being together but still allowing for:
- Reduced mileage (and therefore staff time)
- Maintained interaction between EP and Commercial
- Maintains contact and relationships with other departments i.e. Planning
- Allows senior management and member interaction with the EH team – ensures still have a presence at the satellite office
- Reaction to incidents, flexibility
- Provides model for attracting other Councils to join
- Increases knowledge base

Consensus and challenge were maintained by the final recommendation to members being made by Project Board, supported by Pav Ramewal (SDC) and Chris Oliver (DBC) to ensure the project benefited from experience gained through the Revenues and Benefits project.

Having selected a preferred model the Project Team worked with the specialists from HR, Finance, IT, Customer Services and Legal to add detail to the selected forward operating model. The principle elements of the work undertaken are addressed within this report including the following key components:

- Organisational structure
- Service Standards
- ICT approach and costs
- Customer Implications
- Staff implications
- Business support implications
- Culture
- Route map / timeline
- Financial case
- Governance
- Risk

Timescales for this work was deliberately tight to ensure momentum was maintained and a draft business case (early version of this document) was produced to enable consultation with staff to take place in August and September 2011.

2.3.1 Implementation

It is proposed that the business case and plans developed as the project progresses will be used as a basis for implementation of the joint working arrangements, subject to Member approval of the project.

This work will comprise:

- Further refinement of detail on the forward operating model
- Designing and agreeing an implementation plan
- Producing a detailed route map/timeline

2.4 Project Key Players and Roles

This section details the officers involved in this project and their roles.

2.4.1 Key Players

(1) Project Board

- Sheri Green (Strategic Director, DBC)
- Kristen Paterson (Community & Planning Services Director & Deputy Chief Executive SDC)
- Richard Wilson (Head of Environmental & Operational Services, SDC)

(2) Project Team

- Annie Sargent Environmental Health Manager (SDC/DBC)
- Julie Short, Shona McQuade (DBC)
- Glenys Shorrick, Alex Dawson (SDC)
- Richard Wilson and Sheri Green as required for particular tasks

(4) Specialist roles

- Costs – Adrian Rowbotham (SDC) Finance Manager, and Steve Brooks (DBC) Head of Finance and Resources
- ICT – Jim Carrington-West (SDC) Head of IT and Facilities Management and Richard James (DBC) IT Manager
- Human Resources (HR) – Carrie McKenzie-Lloyd (SDC) Human Resources Manager and Phillipa Curtis (DBC)
- Legal – Marie Kelly-Stone(DBC) and Christine Nuttall(SDC)
- Accommodation – Tricia Marshall (SDC) Head of Finance and Human Resources and Sheri Green (DBC) Strategic Director
- Customer Services – Brian Hatt (SDC) Customer Services Manager, and Carol Russell (DBC) Customer Services Manager
- Staff and other stakeholders interviewed and involved in group sessions

5) Consultant and Project Manager

- Darren Walklate (Walklates)

2.4.2 Roles

The roles of Project team, Manager and the Project Board are outlined below.

| Project Board |
|---|
| 1. Agree the project plans and documentation |
| 2. Enable communication to all staff and stakeholders |
| 3. Provide guidance relating to wider aspects and activities from both Councils |
| 4. Monitor progress against the plans and agree any revisions necessary as the project progresses |
| 5. Assist in problem solving, e.g. to help the Project Manager / Consultant resolve scoping issues that are unclear |
| 6. Identify and manage risks and issues |
| 7. Agree any re-prioritisation of work or reallocation of resources necessary to ensure milestones are achieved and risks are managed effectively |
| 8. Resolve issues brought to it |

| Project Team |
|---|
| 1. Review and assimilate existing project information |
| 2. Update, revise and collate project data |
| 3. Regular meetings with project manager to work on elements of the project |
| 4. Communication and feedback to teams |
| 5. Provide relevant professional input and service standards |
| 6. Risk management input |

| Consultant and Project Manager |
|---|
| 1. Facilitate delivery of the Project on behalf of the Project Board. |
| 2. Liaise with Joint EH Manager and Project Team to ensure all non-Walklates deliverables and all Partnership dependencies are achieved within the agreed project time-scales |
| 3. Ensure that deliverables meet requirements |
| 4. Review and agree project documentation |
| 5. Monitor progress against plans |
| 6. Issue and Risk Management |
| 7. Produce Project Deliverables |
| 8. Facilitate Workshops and Events |
| 9. Attend project review meetings to facilitate acceptable resolution of issues |

3. Baseline Analysis

3.1 Introduction

This section utilises previously reported data collated in June 2011.

3.2 Overview of the Environmental Health Services

Environmental Protection

The Environmental Protection Team has a statutory role to protect the local environment, enforce and monitor standards and to prevent and control environmental pollution. The work is both reactive and proactive. The Councils issue permits to regulate certain industrial processes which have the potential to emit pollution into the air. These include, amongst others, vehicle re-spraying operations, dry cleaning establishments, petrol stations and cement batching plants.

The team investigates complaints related to nuisance, public health, pest control and drainage as well as providing animal welfare and stray dog services. Air quality is formally reviewed and assessed every three years, and as a result, both Councils have declared Air Quality Management Area's.

The team advises on Development Control. The Local Authorities are the main regulators of contaminated land. The vast majority of these potentially contaminated land sites are remediated through the development control planning process. EP scrutinises, comments, set conditions and approves remediation and verification reports for such applications.

The EP team is a main consultee on Licensing issues, making comments on applications and requesting licence reviews, whilst also playing an integral role in services offered by other sections of both councils.

| Category (combined figures) | 2009/10 | 2010/11 |
|---|----------------|----------------|
| Respond to Nuisance and Public Health service requests | 2158 | 2798 |
| Comments made on Planning Applications | 462 | 434 |
| Ensure compliance of potentially polluting processes | 74 | 75 |
| Out of normal working hours contacts | 1000 | 871 |
| Animal licences issued | 58 | 56 |
| Pest control incidents (DBC) | 781 | 594 |
| Animal welfare & stray dog incidents | 1363 | 1556 |
| Air Quality (excludes review, assessment process, monitoring stations & AQMA's) | 27 | 4 |
| Contaminated Land | 36 | 55 |
| Filthy and Verminous premises (DBC) | 29 | 25 |
| Drainage (includes DBC as proposed to be transferring to EH) | 390 | 346 |
| Commented on Licensing Applications | 62 | 58 |

Commercial

The team enforces and advises on food safety legislation in food businesses to ensure that they are hygienic and that food purchased and/or produced in the authorities area is safe to eat. The team also enforces health & safety legislation in work places where they are the enforcing authority, with the aim of reducing accidents and ill health resulting from work activities. This includes both proactive and reactive work.

Notifications of cases of infectious diseases, including food poisoning are received and the team has a responsibility to prevent the spread of illness and to investigate possible causes.

The team also has a statutory obligation to sample private water supplies (PWS). Up until 2010 PWS were monitored under a routine sampling programme. It is now a requirement to risk assess and monitor each supply and in addition, private distribution systems need to be risk assessed and monitored.

| Category (combined figures) | 2009/10 | 2010/11 |
|---|----------------|----------------|
| Undertake enforcement of registered food premises | 1763 | 1816 |
| Undertake primary inspection/ interventions | 1037 | 971 |
| Act as enforcing authority for workplaces | 3391 | 3077 |
| Undertake Proactive H&S interventions | 363 | 284 |
| And by "Lower risk "questionnaire | 140 | 166 |
| Food safety requests for service | 320 | 329 |
| Food poisoning report investigations and notifiable infectious diseases | 333 | 281 |
| Take food related samples | 183 | 85 |
| Private water samples | 73 | 12 |
| Workplace accidents reported & investigated | 364 | 320 |
| Health and Safety Service requests | 173 | 195 |

Together the Councils currently employ approximately 26.88 full time equivalent (FTE) Environmental Health staff (including carbon management, healthy lifestyle co-ordinator West Kent NHS funded and PDG funded post that ceases October 2011).

The Environmental Health service is supported by the following technology:

| Category | Dartford | Sevenoaks |
|--|----------|-----------|
| Environmental Health System | Uniform | Uniform |
| Document Image Processing (Dip) System | Idox | None |

Corporate Health and Safety

The two Councils currently take a different approach to the corporate H&S function. At Sevenoaks it is undertaken by a corporate H&S advisory group chaired by the Head of Environmental and Operational Services. The group consists of representatives from Community and Planning; Corporate Resources; HR; Emergency Planning; Unison and two Health and Safety Advisors. The Corporate H&S Policy Statement defines the roles for the Chief Executive; Departmental Directors; Heads of Service; Service Managers; Other Managers and Supervisors; the Corporate H&S advisory group; the H&S advisors; the Departmental H&S coordinators and all employees. No staff salaries are charged to this function. There is a small budget [£6000] for training and literature etc.

As at Sevenoaks, Dartford's corporate H&S Policy sets out the roles and responsibilities of Managing Director, Directors, Managers and staff. It is the responsibility of the Strategic Director to provide the Council with a competent Health & Safety Advisor, which part-time role is located within Environmental Health. This role's responsibilities include advising Management on all Health & Safety issues and implications of new legislation, monitoring & maintaining the internal accident reporting system, reporting accident to RIDDOR, investigating accidents (where necessary) and ensuring the Council's Health & Safety Policy and manual are kept up to date.

The post-holder assists with DSE assessments, supports Occupational Health as necessary such as in undertaking complex risk assessments, and delivers Health & Safety training to staff that do not have access to the on-line training package.

The post-holder provides H&S advice to the Contract Appointment Board regarding Contract Tender documents. The post-holder is a member of the Council's Well-Being Group and liaises with external organisations & other Kent Authorities regarding corporate Health & Safety.

Carbon reduction

Local Authorities are required by legislation to be involved in various carbon management/climate change activities. The Energy Bill is currently before Parliament will put further responsibility on Local Authorities in relation to Climate Change.

At Dartford, work on carbon reduction, climate change and home energy conservation is coordinated by the Environmental Promotions Officer and delivered by a cross-departmental officer group and a range of external agencies. The Environmental Promotions Officer sits within the Environmental Health Environmental Protection team. The Carbon Management work is reported directly to the Regeneration Director who is the Councils Carbon Champion Director and home energy conservation activities are commissioned by the Housing Sector Private Renewals Team.

At Sevenoaks, climate change and energy efficiency activities falls primarily within the remit of the Housing Policy Team, with individual sections, including Environmental Health, contributing through a corporate Climate Change group to reduce carbon and achieving wider climate change targets. The Property Services Manager is responsible for reducing carbon in the Council's buildings and, as at Dartford, home energy conservation activities are commissioned by the Private Sector Housing Team. These various activities are led by an externally funded 50% FTE Energy/Efficiency post.

Healthy lifestyles

Both Councils receives an annual funding allocation from West Kent NHS for the delivery of targeted health interventions to improve the overall health and wellbeing of people living and working across the borough. Outreach programmes focus on two NHS priority areas; Weight Management & Communities (including smoking, drug & alcohol abuse and mental wellbeing) and are delivered in conjunction with various external agencies and the voluntary sector.

At Dartford the health promotion function is located within Environmental Health whereas at Sevenoaks it is within Community Development.

Healthy Lifestyles and carbon reduction roles will continue under different arrangements and as such are outside the scope of this document.

3.3 Performance Indicators

The Environmental Health service is assessed nationally through performance indicators, although the previously collected measures are to be replaced by Government.

The table below provides details of performance for 2009/10 and 2010/11.

| Performance Indicator | Sevenoaks | Dartford |
|--|-------------|---------------|
| Food Establishments in the area which are broadly compliant with food hygiene law | 85% (09/10) | 91.3% (09/10) |
| | 88% (10/11) | 86.5% (10/11) |
| Percentage of higher risk (categories A& B1) health & safety inspections due that were completed | 100% | 100% |
| | 100% | 69.5% |
| Percentage of Total EH cases responded to within 5 working days | 91% | 95.4% |
| | 94% | 96.1% |
| Percentage of higher risk food inspections due that were completed (categories A & B) | 100% | 100% |
| | 100% | 96% |
| Percentage of Category C middle risk food inspections due that were completed | 100% | 100% |
| | 100% | 100% |

4. Forward Operating Model

4.1 Introduction

This section explains how the Environmental Health service would be delivered under joint working. The approach to joint working is referred to in this report as the forward operating model.

The proposed organisation design is based on the following criteria.

- Environmental Health management and administration will be delivered from Dartford with a satellite office in Sevenoaks. Dartford was chosen as the preferred location by the Board comparing a number of criteria the most significant of which being the higher concentration of commercial inspection work in Dartford and to the north of the Sevenoaks District.
- Customer face-to-face contact will remain unchanged from current arrangements

4.2 Service Standard Definition

The Project Team has sought to design a service that meets statutory obligations in line with the best practice in Kent and nationally. The following tables set out the performance targets for key service standards, which have been assumed when designing the forward operating model:

Standards for Environmental Protection

| Performance Area | Standard | Comments |
|---|---|---|
| % of service requests that receive a response within 5 working days | 70% (2011/12) 80% (2012/13) 90% (2013/14) | |
| LAPPC inspections due completed | 100% (2011/12) 100% (2012 onwards) | |
| Animal licensing | 100% | |
| Planning Application responses | 85% | Within 28 days of the applications planning refer to EH |
| Air Quality reporting | 100% on time and to required standard | |
| Response time to Councillors and MPs | In line with corporate standards at both sites | |

Standards for Commercial

| Performance Area | Standard | Comments |
|--|---|---|
| % of Category A & B1 H&S inspections due and completed | 100% | In addition the service undertakes proactive interventions of other categories |
| % of High Risk food (cat A&B) inspections due and completed | 100% | |
| % of other food inspections due and completed | 80% (2011/12) 85% (2012/13) 90% (2013/14) | |
| % of service requests that receive a response within 5 working days | 70% (2011/12) 80% (2012/13) 90% (2013/14) | |
| % of food businesses in the district that are broadly compliant with food hygiene legislation | 80% (2011/12) 85% (2012/13) 85% (2013/14) | |
| Food sampling: | Minimum 75 per year | Sample in accordance with agreed HPA/ Kent Sampling sub-group programme. |
| % of Private Water (PW) supplies & distribution systems risk assessed and with a monitoring programme in place | 50% (2014) 100% (2015) | By end 2012-complete 100% risk assessments of PW supplies & have a monitoring programme in place By end 2013- to identify 100% Private distribution systems (PDS) By end 2014-to complete 50% risk assessments of PDS By end 2015- to complete 100% risk assessments of PDS and have a monitoring programme in place |
| % of notifiable infectious diseases, (including food borne diseases) investigated. | 100% | To be investigated in accordance with the Framework Agreement with the Kent Health Protection Unit |

EH objectives and performance targets will be reviewed annually by both councils and, on an on-going basis, as a result of any new legislation and guidance.

Organisation Design

4.2.1 Staffing numbers

Staffing requirements were calculated on the basis of the current number of staff carrying out particular roles at each Council, with an adjustment for economies of scale based on the judgement of the Project Team and Project Board. The organisational structure was designed over the course of the project and once finalised the following validations were made to ensure its fitness for purpose:

- Professional input from both Councils i.e. using managers that may be tasked with delivering the service to validate the structures;
- Taking account of challenge and constructive input from the consultant and the Project Board; and
- Comparison with the two current structure diagrams ensuring each role is covered and that all tasks can be allocated within the structure.

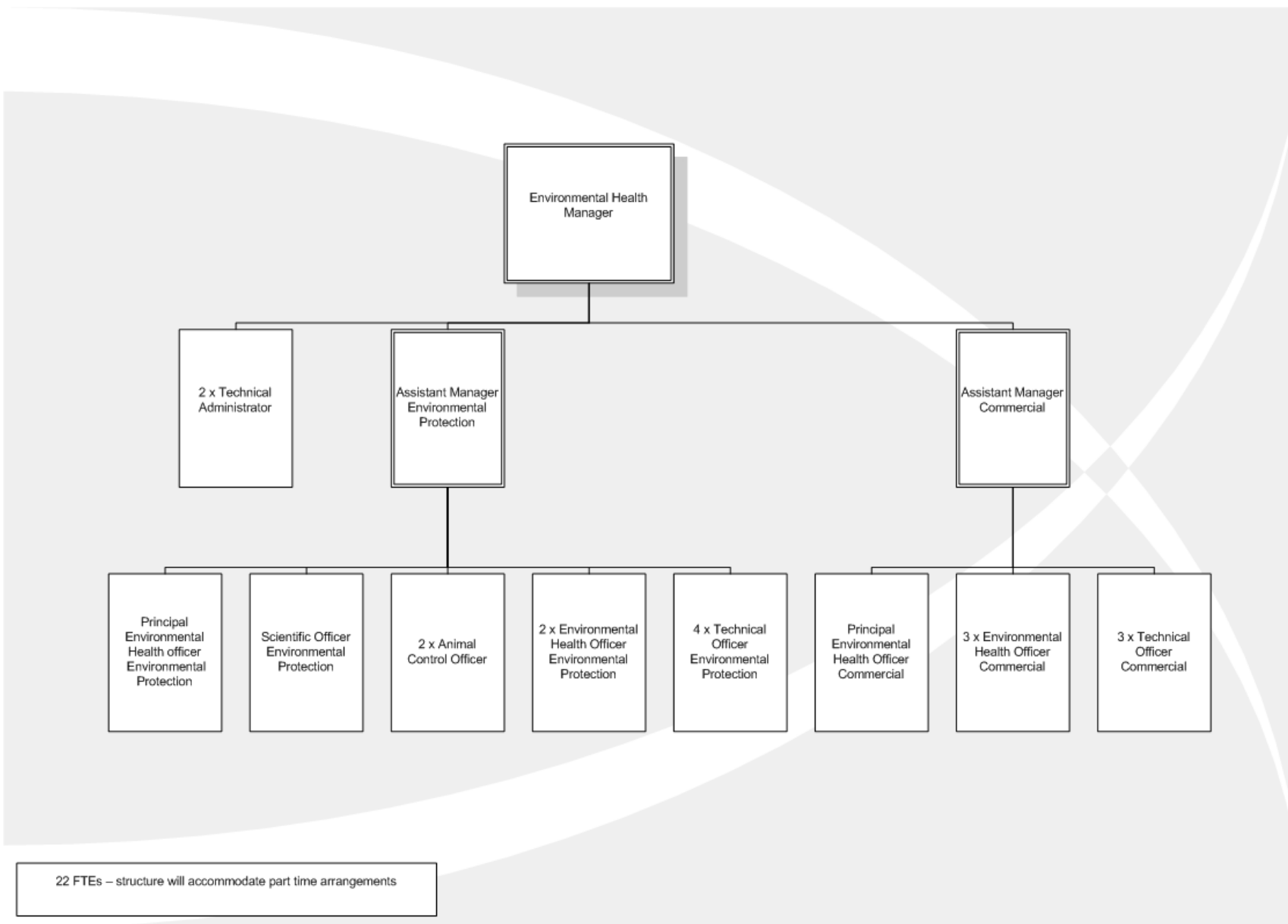
4.2.2 Organisation structure

Having determined the number of staff required, organisation structures were created on the basis of reasonable spans of control - taking into account current procedures and processes and adapting them based on anticipated use of existing technology.

The organisation structure comprises roles that are currently in existence at each of the Councils. These roles have been costed on the basis of the anticipated grade.

The structure takes account of a number of posts already removed plus further reductions in order to achieve savings targets. In total (compared with 2010/11) the structure from 2012/13 will have around seven fewer full time equivalent staff across the two councils.

The following organisational structure has been agreed, and used to cost the forward operating model:



5. Technology Infrastructure and ICT

5.1 Infrastructure/ Network services

In terms of Information and Communications Technology (ICT), this project benefits considerably from a strong starting point. Both Councils have robust ICT arrangements for supporting the Environmental Health service and a demonstrable ability to provide a shared facility.

The key consideration in the context of shared working is the core business applications used to support day-to-day working. Most importantly, the core computer system for the Environmental Health service in both Councils is Uni-form (supplied by The Idox Group). So whilst there are operational differences, there is already a common base of knowledge and practice.

For managing documents within the respective services, DBC uses a system called Idox whilst SDC does not currently utilise a document management system within Environmental Health. However, helpfully, SDC also currently operates Idox for managing documents in other corporate areas. Thus, it would be straightforward, in technical terms, to move to single, shared usage of Idox for this service area.

Furthermore, with regard to infrastructure, networks and office systems, there are no blockers to integration. Likewise, accommodation would not be a problem.

The use of GIS (Geographical Information Systems) technology is a requirement by the respective services to support the shared facility. It is intended that the existing GIS applications currently in use at DBC and SDC are used initially. A review will be undertaken into the use of GIS applications to support the Air Quality and Contaminated Land functions, as it is anticipated that efficiency gains can be made by using alternative applications or software already in use within the respective services.

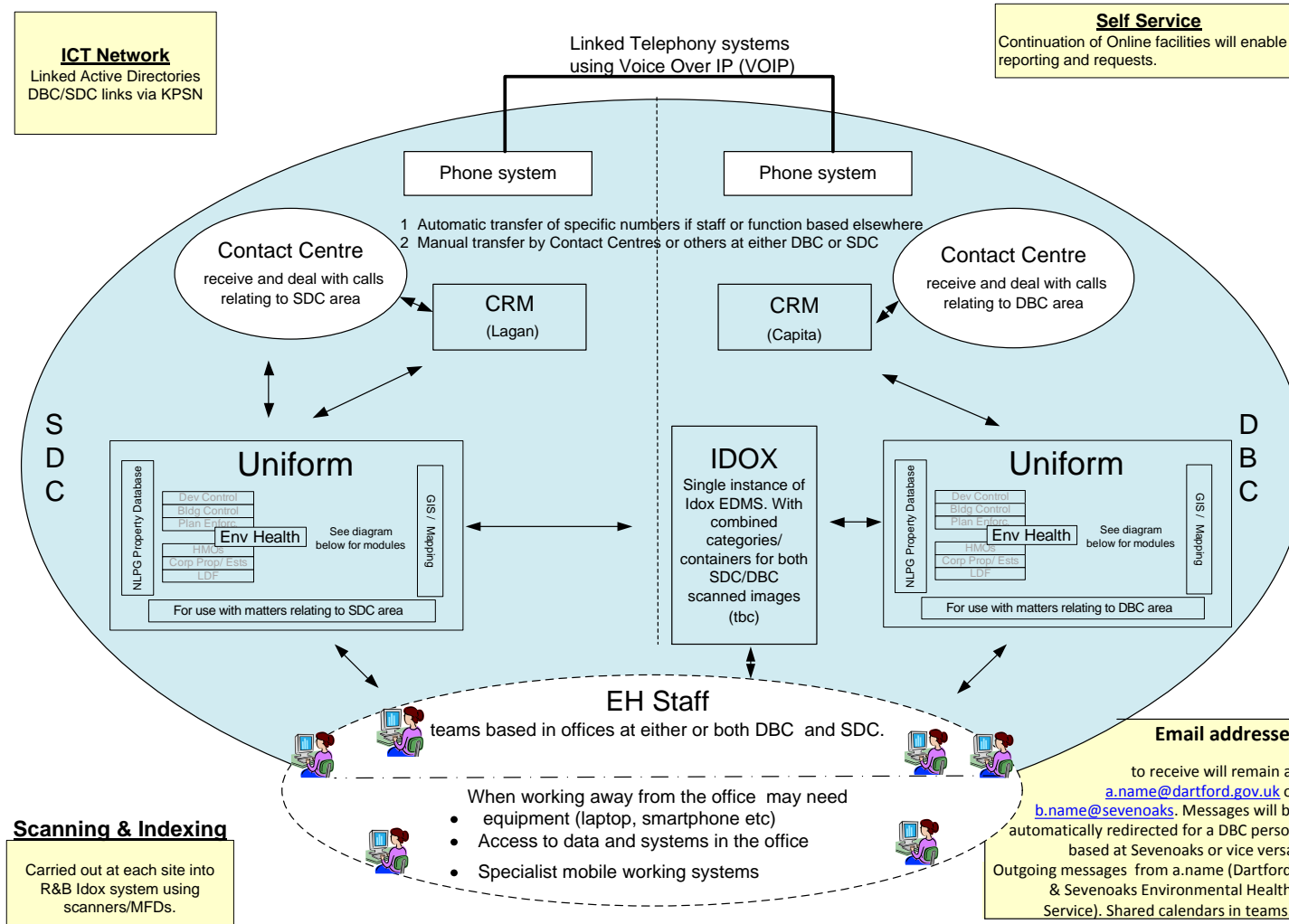
There is the potential for further joint working in this area by combining the GIS information available to the shared facility. Investigations into the potential for this will be undertaken, although the delivery of a shared GIS for EH is outside the scope of this project.

The following diagram depicts the approach to facilitating joint working agreed by the ICT group, guided by the Project Team and Project Board. This approach has been used to inform the business case section of this report. The approach has been validated by the ICT group to ensure it is fit for purpose and by the professionals within the Project Team to ensure it meets their business requirements. Further detailed work will of course be required should the project progress to implementation but the following information is likely to be a very good indication of an actual approach.

Home working forms part of the options included in this proposal. At the time of writing, numbers of potential home workers have not been identified but a cost of £1,000 per home worker can be used as a budgetary guide.

Mobile working is outside the initial scope of this proposal. Discussions with the business area regarding the initial setup of a joint service suggest that attentions would be focussed on deploying the IT infrastructure and systems to support the initial setup with mobile working considered in a later phase. It is evident that there are a number of possible approaches to mobile working including a 'mix and match' solution. . These would need to be investigated further when appropriate and relevant costing and return on investment identified as part of this process.

Diagrammatic Representation of Key ICT elements to support shared working in Environmental Health



Draft IT Costs of shared Environmental Health

| Item | Saving | Cost – Setup | Cost - Ongoing |
|--|---|---|--|
| Shared Network | | | |
| Extend use of KPSN to linked DBC & SDC networks. | Nil | Nil - | No additional costs |
| Linking Active Directories at SDC/DBC | | Nil | No additional costs |
| Changes to SDC/DBC email systems in line with R&B shared service. | | | No additional costs |
| Application Delivery via SDC Citrix Solution | | | No additional costs |
| Upgrade to Uniform and Oracle at SDC to allow connection from WKIP Citrix Servers | | Nil – This would need to be completed as a pre-requisite to providing access to multiple Uni-form systems through the existing infrastructure and is programmed in for Sept /October | |
| Telephony Systems | | | |
| Extend use of link telephony systems using voice over IP. | Nil | Allow 2 days consultancy £1900 | No additional costs |
| Uniform Systems | | | |
| Continued provision of separate Uniform system with one for DBC, one for SDC. | Assume zero saving in annual maintenance. | Nil directly Allow 2 days Idox consultancy £1900 | See concurrent licences below. |
| Additional concurrency licences concurrency | | 10 additional licenses required for DBC at an estimated cost of £12,000 . Indications are there is sufficient capacity within the SDC system for an additional 10 concurrent users <u>corporately</u> | £3000 per 10 additional licenses required. |
| Upgrade of DBC Uniform server (increase processors) | | To permit use of second processor already in place (currently switched off for cost purposes). The Oracle licence £10-17K | 1750 |
| Align modules in use - scoping exercise to be undertaken by project working group. | No saving even if modules discontinued | If decision taken to implement new modules likely to involve consultancy + training | |
| Consultancy to develop best practice | | 2 days £1900 | |
| Document Management | | | |

6. Customers

6.1 Standards

Both councils have corporate performance standards and local arrangements will be maintained.

6.2 Shared Service Customer Charter

Within the implementation process, the shared Environmental Health Service will need to design and publish a Customer Charter that would bring together the best of customer service practice from both organisations. This charter would provide customers with a baseline of the service that they can reasonably expect to receive. A shared customer charter will also ensure the service levels to both councils are the same and will ensure that the service is actually meeting customer needs.

6.3 Council Formal Complaints Procedures

The procedure adopted for dealing with Formal Complaints for Revenues and Benefits Shared service will be adapted for use by the Environmental Health Shared Service. Customers will be directed to their home council complaints procedure and Environmental Health managers will have knowledge of both procedures and ensure that appropriate action is taken by liaising with relevant client authority complaints officer. It is anticipated that by each of the Councils aligning the two separate corporate procedures at some point in the future, further efficiencies will be made.

6.4 Levels of service

Service standards (at 4.2 above) have been set with broad aim of maintaining current levels of service in the longer term. The focus once the shared service is up and running would be to further improve Value for Money.

Customer service provision will not be substantially altered under the forward operating model envisaged. Regardless of location base of each team, customers would continue to contact their own local authority telephone number or visit their respective council offices to register their service request. Customers will not have to interact differently (e.g. travel to a different location) under the forward operating model. The opportunity will be in place for wider access (i.e. DBC customers at SDC outlets and vice versa) but this will not be compulsory.

Each of the contact centre teams would log service requests to each of the EH team Uniform systems as existing. Case references would be distinguished by a suffix "D" or "S" for each location source.

For telephone calls, it is anticipated that each team would be able to access the two telephone systems across both councils and would be able to transfer calls either to the relevant team or relevant officer.

No modification will be required to the respective payments systems at each authority for stray dog fines. At some point once the services are together, one authority alone could administer these payments to further improve efficiency.

Technology available to the new service should increase the opportunity for self service and extended access

6.5 Communicating changes to customers, internal & external stakeholders

Transition impacts on customers will be minimised. Previous experience has shown that customer surveys that ask about access arrangements are inconclusive. Customers are only interested in having their issue dealt with; they are not interested in corporate identity issues.

Existing Email addresses will be retained by officers with an explanatory paragraph of how the service operates being included at the bottom of each email. The email addresses linked to each council website will also be reviewed and linked if required for administrative purposes.

External government organisations will be formally informed of the two council's shared arrangements. A separate annual performance return for each council will be prepared and sent to the Food Standards Agency and the Health and Safety Executive in line with current practice.

The customer services teams at both Dartford and Sevenoaks councils will be fully briefed on the new arrangements and operating procedures before the new service is implemented. The Service Managers at both Sevenoaks and Dartford will be updated monthly during the transition process. Articles will be published about changes to the services on both council intranets to inform council staff on both sites.

6.6 Transition Impacts

It is also important to plan how the existing level of service will be maintained during the change over from the current position to the forward operating model. It will be important to involve customer services managers and staff in the planning process to ensure best outcomes are achieved.

To maximise the opportunity to improve service for customers; it is essential that every opportunity is taken to align processes between the two organisations at the earliest available opportunity. The joint working project aims to achieve one level of customer service irrespective of where customers are from (see above). Procedures will be more difficult to align but it is envisaged that the new managers, once in post, would make these operational decisions. Environmental Health staff on both sites will be required to carry out their duties according to the same nationally determined standards. This requirement will remain constant.

7. Staff

7.1 Legal Status

The forward operating model assumes staff will remain employed by their existing employers for a period of up to two years. It is also during this time that the Councils will be establishing, through consultation, future employment arrangements.

The project will allow sufficient time for job evaluation (requires job descriptions, person specifications and job grades). It is envisaged that the project would use both separate schemes (DBC and SDC use different ones) and harmonise outcomes. There will only be job evaluation where a job has changed substantially.

7.2 Redundancy/ Redeployment

A joint redundancy / redeployment and ring-fencing approach has been agreed.

7.3 Staff Consultation

Consultation is an important element of the change management and will continue as the project progresses, increasing over time as decisions are made. Consultation has taken place with staff and managers on a range of factors potentially affecting them (which include job changes, staffing reductions, relocation and widening or narrowing of duties) and staff views have been considered and fed back into the project on an ongoing basis.

Staff have been briefed throughout the project and this will continue. Staff have been consulted on specific service location and organisational structure proposals. The consultation period ended on 23rd September with Members being updated on progress at the relevant committee meetings.

7.4 Home working and Job Design

Home working and job redesign has been considered in the design of the forward operating model. It is felt that the new structure includes the opportunity to develop staff and assist with succession planning. Home working will be offered as a possibility where it is deemed worthwhile for the individual and the business need.

7.5 Travel costs

Travelling expenses for staff that have to move job location have been assumed and an allowance for this as a transition cost over two years has been built into the business case. The rationale used to calculate this allowance is based on a price per mile of 40p. This equates to approximately £10 per day (£6.50 net of tax) per member of staff and it is assumed that on average the equivalent of five staff might fall into this category.

7.6 Other Policies

Other policies (such as leave) might have an impact on service delivery and thus will need to be considered as part of implementation. In most cases, both Councils have policies in place, which do not differ significantly, so this issue is unlikely to be important in the short term.

Meetings and corporate duties such as elections will still need to be covered for both Councils. The Project Board is confident that the forward operating model is sufficiently flexible to accommodate this.

8. Business Support

8.1 Customer Services HR ICT

See separate individual sections within this document

8.2 Legal

Decisions regarding prosecutions and legal action will be retained by each council. It has been presumed that legal advice, whether required for legal action or not, will follow the same approach and there will be no change to the costs relating to this issue. A common enforcement policy will be essential to ensure consistent approach to enforcement irrespective of which council does the work.

8.3 Financial

There is a difference in the structure and detail of accounting systems for each Council. It is considered essential that these are aligned, not least in order to allow consideration of budget savings resulting from the shared service.

8.4 Property

As the forward operating model does not propose any additional accommodation requirements, there are no significant issues with arrangements to accommodate staff within existing premises.

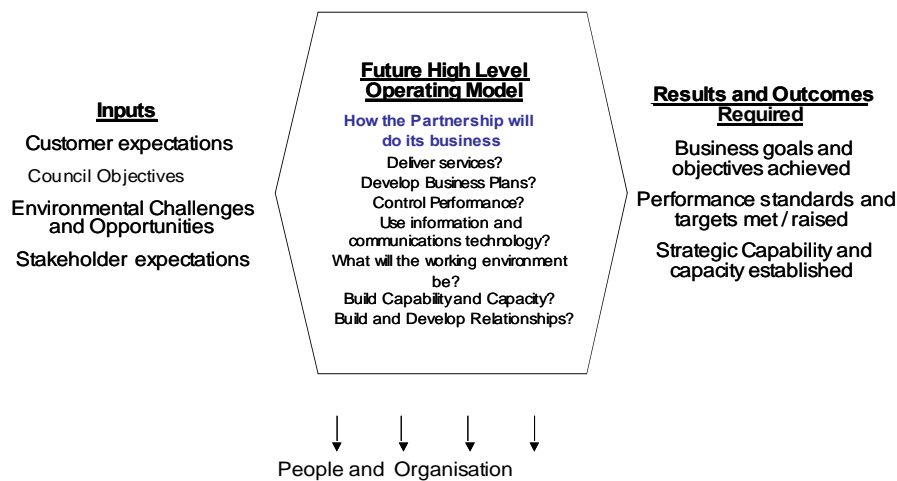
No savings have been attributed to this area as there is no way of knowing (at this stage) if the space that may be freed up could be reused. There are no costs anticipated for unused accommodation.

9. Culture

9.1 Introduction

To realise the stated objective, the forward operating model will need to determine the way the joint service will do its business. This will be achieved through a combination of technology, improved processes, changing stakeholder expectations and the way people work.

Overall the forward operating model will enable managers and staff to develop new ways of working to achieve best practice for the combined service.



9.2 Values and Beliefs

It is important that the implementation team understands how to grow and sustain the right values and behaviours that will enable success, such as:

- Customer-focused values and behaviours will be key to managing external and internal customer relationships
- Team working and collaboration is essential to enable effective partnering and develop/deliver an integrated service
- Personal accountability is vital with a focus on delivering results and tackling real priorities first

Once the new managers are in post, the team should determine/ confirm a set of values and build this into the service planning approach. This work cannot be done in advance as the new team should be identifying its own values.. To align to one or other positions (or to a different one) will require a participative exercise over a period of time, which involves staff and underpins the change management process.

9.3 Leadership styles

The forward operating model will be demanding to deliver and needs a management team that is capable of working together and providing strong leadership. It is therefore important to agree common management competencies when job descriptions are drawn up. These job descriptions will seek to meet the requirements of both Councils.

There are training and development opportunities already in operation at both Councils, which could be combined and utilised to enhance skills within the newly formed team. The forward operating model will be built upon adopting the principles of empowerment.

9.4 Managing performance and recognising good / or poor performance

The joint service will develop - once managers are appointed - to understand how it will:

- Plan and set objectives
- Monitor and manage performance against objectives
- Improve performance especially in terms of value for money (VFM) and efficiency

It is envisaged that there will be a single annual service plan (relating to both corporate plans) that will be taken through Member review arrangements along with any growth or savings proposals for the service. Service plans will be developed in conjunction with staff and be used to inform one to one interviews and appraisals.

Use of performance related payments (relating to exceptional performance) currently only apply to staff at SDC. This, and similar issues, will be addressed as part of the implementation.

Human Resources representatives confirm that the capability process is already standardised.

9.5 Competencies and Skills

The newly formed team will have to develop an approach to ensuring and sustaining continuous development of staff. The following are already in place or could easily be utilised within the new team:

- Management Development training at DBC and SDC
- CIEH and other professional training opportunities (often low cost)
- In house training facilities and Ivysoft interactive learning
- Weekly updates by email / intranet to confirm changes and share information
- Regular team meetings and one-to-ones to allow face to face interaction
- Skills analysis across the new team

9.6 Branding

The joint service will need to establish its brand and position within the marketplace. Customers need confirmation that current service provision in the longer term will be maintained or enhanced and not diminished. Forms, leaflets etc must be made common under the new branding. It is also important that the branding does not restrict future expansion possibilities as other Councils, which may not be from the West Kent area, may wish to take advantage of joining the partnership.

9.7 Roles, accountabilities and responsibilities

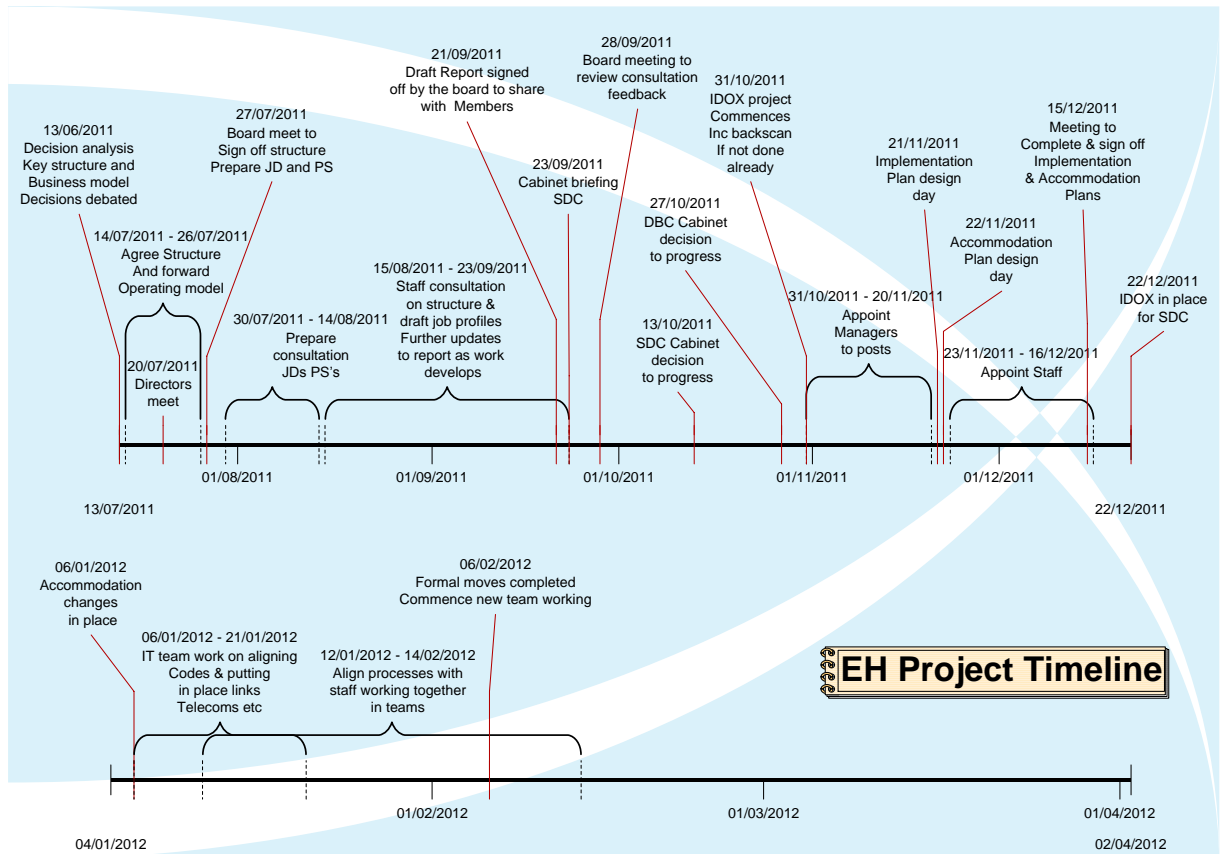
The joint service organisational structure offers the opportunity to increase productivity and build morale through the further development of interesting, challenging jobs that continue to motivate and develop staff as follows:

- Alignment of Job description / profiles with the responsibilities and performance required of the jobholder
- Potential for increased autonomy and flexibility
- Projects will be undertaken by staff who express an interest and ability to get involved
- Getting staff involved in change as it progresses – information initially and developing to a participative and inclusive approach.

10. Timeline/ Route Map

The creation of a detailed route map is planned once the business case has been established.

The following diagram represents early thinking by the Project Board and Project Team to capture an indicative timeline. This work will be used as a starting point as the project progresses, but will involve wider consultation with managers and staff to ensure all aspects of the transition are captured.



As can be seen from the diagram above, it is intended that:

- Staff consultation on structure and Job roles takes place over six weeks commencing 15th August and concluding on 23rd September 2011
- All relevant aspects of EH ICT to be in place by January 2012
- New EH team will be in place by early February 2012

Although not shown above, an operational review of the service will take place by April 2013.

11. Financial case

11.1 Projected Costs and Savings

This section overviews the projected costs and savings, which are estimated to emerge from the operation of the forward operating model for joint working.

The business case has been prepared with the following parameters:

- A five year timescale – from 2012/13 (the first year of full effect of savings)
- Costs are mostly as at 2011/12 prices – no adjustment has been made for inflation
- Full operation is assumed to commence from April 2012
- Staffing costs are calculated on a mix of DBC and SDC grades, with 22% on-costs
- The projected costs & savings will continue to be scrutinised and refined

11.2 Development

The Project Team working with accountants from both Councils has developed the projected costs/ savings emerging from the preferred business model and confirmed the current costs. The team has focused on 2 key financial dimensions in particular:

- The definition of the forward organisation chart to enable an estimate of staffing costs
- Estimates of likely additional costs and savings through shared working for key elements. The group expressed these costs and savings in terms of deviation from the current baseline.

| | |
|--|--|
| Staffing Costs | Shown in table 11.3, salary costs (including 22% on-costs - but excluding any allowance for pension deficit) are projected on the basis of the defined joint working organisation chart/ staffing structure and shown as appropriate within direct costs/ staffing costs in the projected costs table. |
| Additional costs primarily one-off/ implementation costs | These are summarised in the separate costs table at 11.4, which is further analysed to establish a write off period and the likely pay back period. |
| Savings | Savings are shown in a separate table at 11.5. These are analysed by activity area for both councils. |

11.3 Financial Case

| | Year 1 | Year 2 | Year 3 | Year 4 | Year 5 | Total |
|-----------------------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|---------------|
| | 2012/13 | 2013/14 | 2014/15 | 2015/16 | 2016/17 | |
| | £000 | £000 | £000 | £000 | £000 | £000 |
| Current Costs | | | | | | |
| Staffing costs | 1,293 | 1,293 | 1,293 | 1,293 | 1,293 | 6,465 |
| Transport costs | 28 | 28 | 28 | 28 | 28 | 140 |
| Supplies and services | 292 | 292 | 292 | 292 | 292 | 1,460 |
| Technology | 10 | 10 | 10 | 10 | 10 | 50 |
| Misc | 22 | 22 | 22 | 22 | 22 | 110 |
| Total Direct Costs | 1,645 | 1,645 | 1,645 | 1,645 | 1,645 | 8,225 |
| Customer Services | 140 | 140 | 140 | 140 | 140 | 700 |
| Corporate Services | 125 | 125 | 125 | 125 | 125 | 625 |
| Property Services | 110 | 110 | 110 | 110 | 110 | 550 |
| IT Services | 178 | 178 | 178 | 178 | 178 | 890 |
| Management & other | 83 | 83 | 83 | 83 | 83 | 415 |
| Total Indirect Costs | 636 | 636 | 636 | 636 | 636 | 3,180 |
| Total Net Costs | 2,281 | 2,281 | 2,281 | 2,281 | 2,281 | 11,405 |

| Future Costs | | | | | | |
|-----------------------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|
| Staffing costs | 994 | 994 | 934 | 934 | 934 | 4,789 |
| Transport costs | 28 | 28 | 28 | 28 | 28 | 139 |
| Supplies and services | 291 | 291 | 291 | 291 | 291 | 1,454 |
| Technology | 10 | 10 | 10 | 10 | 10 | 50 |
| Misc | 23 | 23 | 23 | 23 | 23 | 113 |
| Total Direct Costs | 1,345 | 1,345 | 1,285 | 1,285 | 1,285 | 6,545 |
| Customer Services | 140 | 140 | 140 | 140 | 140 | 699 |
| Corporate Services | 125 | 125 | 125 | 125 | 125 | 628 |
| Property Services | 110 | 110 | 110 | 110 | 110 | 550 |
| IT Services | 178 | 178 | 178 | 178 | 178 | 889 |
| Management & other | 83 | 83 | 83 | 83 | 83 | 414 |
| Total Indirect Costs | 636 | 636 | 636 | 636 | 636 | 3,180 |
| Total Future Costs | 1,981 | 1,981 | 1,921 | 1,921 | 1,921 | 9,725 |

| | | | | | | |
|------------------------------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|
| Forecast Annual Savings | (300) | (300) | (360) | (360) | (360) | (1,680) |
| Forecast Cumulative Savings | (300) | (600) | (960) | (1,320) | (1,680) | (1,680) |

11.4 Implementation Costs Summary

| Estimated one-off/ implementation costs | | | | | | | |
|--|------------|------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|------------|
| Costs | 2011/12 | 2012/13 | 2013/14 | 2014/15 | 2015/16 | 2016/17 | Total |
| IT costs | 35 | 5 | 5 | 5 | 5 | 5 | 60 |
| Implementing Idox | 15 | | | | | | 15 |
| Home working | 5 | | | | | | 5 |
| Travel costs for movers | | 10 | 10 | | | | 20 |
| Miscellaneous | | 20 | 10 | | | | 30 |
| Office changes | 10 | | | | | | 10 |
| Redundancy Provision | 180 | | | | | | 180 |
| Pay protection for staff | | 20 | 20 | 14 | 6 | 6 | 66 |
| Backfill for transition and project management | 50 | 50 | | | | | 100 |
| Total costs | 295 | 105 | 45 | 19 | 11 | 11 | 486 |

| | | |
|---------------------------|----------|-------|
| Estimated set up costs | £486,000 | |
| Written off over 5 years | £97,000 | pa |
| Written off over 10 years | £49,000 | pa |
| Payback period | 1.62 | Years |

11.5 Savings Summary

| Estimated Savings | 2012/13 | 2013/14 | 2014/15 | 2015/16 | 2016/17 | Total |
|---|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|----------------|
| Savings | £000 | £000 | £000 | £000 | £000 | £000 |
| Staff savings from new organisational structure | (290) | (290) | (290) | (290) | (290) | (1,420) |
| Student post replace with work experience – work not training | (4) | (4) | (4) | (4) | (4) | (20) |
| Out of hours – redesign service to reduce costs | (5) | (5) | (5) | (5) | (5) | (25) |
| Longer term savings by taking on other LAs or paring down structure | | | (60) | (60) | (60) | (180) |
| DBC joining food safety training (as SDC do currently) to increase the income currently generated from training | (1) | (1) | (1) | (1) | (1) | (5) |
| Total savings | (300) | (300) | (360) | (360) | (360) | (1,680) |

12. Governance

12.1 Introduction

It is anticipated that the partnership arrangement will have a governing document or partnership agreement that sets out the partnership arrangements in order that the parties adhere to the values and responsibilities of the partnership. There is already in existence a draft Partnership Working Agreement between Dartford Borough Council and Sevenoaks District Council which is in generic format and which facilitates the joint delivery of certain functions. The functions set out within such Agreement can be added to as an addendum to Schedule 1 of the Agreement.

Some of the main provisions of the agreement cover:

- Functions and responsibilities of the partnership
- Delegations
- Outlines financial reporting and budgetary arrangements
- Exit strategy
- How performance will be measured
- How risks and benefits will be shared
- Transfer of staff

However, the partnership agreement will not be able to anticipate every eventuality and so at times the arrangements and responsibility for supporting the governance of the partnership may fall to the partners' own corporate governance mechanisms with each partner acting with flexibility, honesty and developing and maintaining trust.

12.2 Structure

Sevenoaks District Council and Dartford Borough Council will remain as two separate councils, keeping their own set of accounts, their own identities and their own councillors. It is anticipated that Dartford Council will be the host authority for delivery of the Environmental Health Service with Sevenoaks Council retaining some agreed functions. An officer partnership board for the shared Environmental Health Service will be created represented by two officers from each council with each officer having a single vote on each decision that needs to be made by the partnership board.

The partnership board should meet at least twice a year and receive each year a report of the Heads of the relevant Shared Service showing progress in achieving the objectives of the business plan, a summary revenue account including the distribution or use of any revenue surpluses and the future financing expenditure.

The partnership board shall make proposals for any changes, which seem to be reasonable and appropriate in the circumstances. The partnership board should consider ways in which the partnership can be expanded and will consider any applications by any prospective new partner at the discretion of the host authority.

12.3 Delegations

Both Councils shall each delegate and empower the other Council to discharge on its behalf the agreed functions of the Environmental Health Service via its Head of Paid Service. The Heads of Paid Service may further delegate any of the Agreed Functions. In discharging the agreed functions the Heads of Paid Service will consider advice given by the partnership board.

12.4 Employment

The Transfer of Undertakings (Protection of Employment) Regulations 2006 (TUPE) protects employees' terms and conditions when a business or undertaking, or part of one, is transferred to a new employer. Under TUPE, the reorganisation of a public administrative authority, or the transfer of administrative functions between public administrations, is not a relevant transfer. Although the meaning of 'administrative' is not defined, the Government guidance reinforces the established view that the principles of TUPE should be adhered to in any intra-governmental reorganisations. To avoid any doubt, the Cabinet Office Statement of Practice 'Staff transfers in the public sector' sets out the Government's policy that TUPE should apply where the public sector is the employer or client in a contracting exercise.

'Where a relevant staff member leaves any existing post within the approved service plan that post shall be filled by the relevant Head of Shared Service and any newly appointed relevant staff member shall be employed by the Council which employed the original member of relevant staff unless otherwise agreed by the relevant Head of Shared Service'. The 'Best value and performance improvement circular' specifies that the transferee service provider must offer employment to new recruits on 'fair and reasonable terms and conditions which are, overall, no less favourable than those of transferred employees' and which offer reasonable pension arrangements.

A number of staff from Sevenoaks District Council may be franchised to Dartford Borough Council on a temporary basis for up to two years in order to avoid complex staff displacement issues with Dartford Borough Council receiving the benefits of the skills and experience of staff from Sevenoaks District Council for Environmental Health Services. Similarly, Dartford Borough Council staff may be franchised to Sevenoaks District Council for the same service. Difficulties exist around differing terms and conditions of staff contracts and the two year period will enable the establishment of future employment arrangements and the carrying out of work to harmonise terms and conditions. However, case law has confirmed that employees assigned to a service automatically transfer to the transferee at the point of the transfer, notwithstanding the wishes and intentions of the parties. So, even if staff and both councils prefer a secondment model rather than a TUPE transfer, the secondment will not be effective if there is a relevant TUPE transfer. However, as there will be a shared Environmental Health Service with retained functions undertaken by both Councils it is not anticipated that a transfer of an undertaking will take place.

12.5 Financial

From the start of the project, there has been a strong and certain presumption that the entire costs and savings of the partnership will be shared on a 50 percent basis including unforeseen costs and savings the remoteness of which to be agreed by the partnership board. Flexibility will need to be built into the partnership agreement to deal with exceptional circumstances but the equal sharing of risk and reward is felt by all concerned to be critical to the success of the joint working project.

The partnership should complete an annual budget planning process and the budget for the year can be managed and monitored through the partnership board. Exceptional reporting to the partnership board could take place if possible changes to the budget became necessary.

Payments between the authorities will be made in accordance with the terms set out in the partnership agreement. Any surplus or deficit will be carried forward and included in the budget calculation for the subsequent year. A review of the factors used in calculation of the sharing percentages will be carried out at least annually including residual support service costs inflated in line with the percentage used for annual national local government pay award.

12.6 Termination

The agreement should be capable of termination by either party giving a reasonable period of notice of termination, for example, at least 18 months written notice of termination provided that such notice may not take effect before a certain date, agreed between the parties.

On termination each council should act reasonably in co-operating with each other to facilitate the disaggregation of the partnership in such a manner as to cause the least disruption to customers and to maintain levels of service as far as possible, agree arrangements for the transfer of staff and avoid redundancies wherever possible, facilitate the transfer of data and records and mitigate costs so far as practical.

The Council giving notice of termination should bear all costs arising out of or in connection with such termination and should indemnify the other council against all costs and expenses incurred or to be incurred by them arising out of or in connection with the termination including costs of redundancy or re-deployment of any staff, termination of any lease or licence for the occupation of any premises or the use of any equipment, procurement of any alternative accommodation or relocation of any services or staff and procurement implementation or reconfiguration of any equipment, preparation, disaggregation and transfer of any data and records and staff costs and administrative overheads in connection with any elements of the termination.

12.7 Performance

The partnership board should agree an annual business plan covering an agreed period including business and financial objectives, staffing levels, performance target and service level agreements.

Sevenoaks District Council may retain certain functions and responsibilities for certain aspects of the Environmental Health Service, which will need to be defined within the partnership agreement. Similarly the agreed functions to be carried out by Dartford Borough Council will be defined within the partnership agreement.

Each council should complete their respective functions in accordance with their respective financial procedures and standing orders.

It is envisaged that there will be close liaison to minimise audit costs and carry out work jointly wherever possible.

The Head of the partnership being a senior officer of the host authority acting under delegated powers shall be empowered to make any necessary technical or operational decisions for the effective operation of the Environmental Health Service including the virement of budgets and appointment of staff. The partnership board should use its reasonable endeavours to ensure fair and equitable treatment of both councils.

In the event of the partnership at any time experiencing a level of performance which is not achieving the agreed targets in the relevant annual Business Plan, the partnership board shall use all its reasonable endeavours to remedy that as a matter of priority.

It may be necessary for the partnership board to vary the transition period depending upon factors that may affect the time taken to implement the necessary changes.

A fundamental review of the service delivery may be required, if considered necessary by the partnership board but not until at least one year after the transitional period has ended.

12.8 Legislative Compliance

Local authorities can generally do only what they are expressly empowered to do and when contemplating entering into collaborative arrangements of any kind should be sure of their powers to do so.

The Local Authorities (Good and Services) Act 1970 enables councils to provide administrative, professional or technical services to other councils and to other public bodies (but not the private sector or the public in general) and section 1 (3) of the act provides for payment for these services. It should be noted that section 2 (2) requires that the accounts of a local authority entering into an agreement to provide a service under this act include a separate account in respect of the agreement.

The Local Government Act 1972 Part VI of this act gives councils the ability to establish joint arrangements, such as the discharge of a function by another council (delegation) or the establishment of a joint committee.

Councils considering a collaborative arrangement such as jointly provided services should ensure and be aware that TUPE will apply if a “relevant transfer” occurs. With the joint administrative services arrangements that are envisaged it is anticipated that a “relevant transfer” will not occur.

The councils will also need to carry out their functions in compliance with all relevant statutory requirements and restrictions including:

- The Data Protection Act
- Access to Information Act
- Equalities Legislation
- Human Rights Legislation
- Freedom of Information Act

Each council may be required to ask the other council for information to enable the satisfaction of a request made upon them under the Freedom of Information Act. The councils will need to support one another in the completion of effective requests under this Act. In addition, each council should ensure that prior to the commencement of the partnership the terms of its registration under the Data Protection legislation with the Information Commissioner enables it to send data relating to the partnership to the other council and to receive data from them and process it for the purpose of carrying out a function of the partnership.

Each council has its own partnership protocol/policy/toolkit and each authority should satisfy itself that the partnership agreement satisfies the requirements of such partnership protocol/policy/toolkit. For a partnership to be effective, certain standards of conduct are expected of the individuals in the partnership. The Sevenoaks partnership toolkit incorporates a partnership protocol on conduct and accountability which is a model drawn up by the Standards for England who have invited local government and their partners to use their protocol and either adopt it wholly or adapt it to fit their own circumstances.

It is envisaged that each council will be responsible for entering into contracts on behalf of the partnership required for the delivery of their particular function. Every contract for the supply of goods and services for a function of the partnership should comply with the Financial and Contract Procedure Rules of the council carrying out the function and those contracts should be in the name of that council but should confirm that it has entered into the contract on behalf of the councils.

12.9 Expansion

The partnership should have the ability to consider ways in which the partnership can be expanded either between the two councils or by considering applications by any prospective new partner.

The decision whether a new partner is admitted to the partnership and if so the terms on which this takes place could be subject to the unanimous agreement of the two councils, firstly at partnership board stage and then at the appropriate member level decision making stage in each council.

13. Risk Assessment

13.1 Risk Register

The implementation of joint working carries a degree of risk. The Project Team, Staff and Board have all been involved in agreeing the principal risks and mitigating strategies detailed in the table below.

| No. | Risk (description) | Strategy |
|-----|---|---|
| 1 | Service delivery could be compromised leading to statutory failings | <p>The service carries out an important statutory function in protecting public health and must not be allowed to fail in pursuit of joint working. Whilst savings are vital to both councils we risk costs that may far outweigh the savings if the ability to deliver the service is compromised. This risk has been mitigated through the following measures:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stakeholders (lead members and senior managers) are fully supportive of the project and will be monitoring outcomes closely Money to support the service during transition will be provided for in the business case |
| 2 | Key criteria for joint working (financial savings) may not be achieved | <p>It is well understood that the new financial climate is a significant driver for this change. It is therefore vital that any risk of overstating the savings or underestimating the costs of the project is minimised. This risk has been mitigated through the following measures:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The costs and savings have been calculated by senior finance officers building on their expertise and experience of previous joint working projects. Senior managers and staff have been closely involved in the calculation of the savings and challenge has been provided by external consultants. Executive management has been closely involved in the exercise from the outset, and understands the rationale for sharing and the benefits that are likely to flow from it. The partners share a similar outlook and set of values |
| 3 | Inability to agree on the type of service to be delivered at a senior level | <p>There are cultural differences between the two Councils that translate into a different approach to delivering Environmental Health Services. Our plans assume that the constraints of the new structure and available funding will help drive changes to working practice once the new team is formed. There is a risk that member and senior managers might not be flexible in this regard. This risk has been mitigated through the following measures:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Executive management has been closely involved in the exercise from the outset, and understands the rationale for sharing and the benefits that are likely to flow from it. Approach to service delivery will not be tackled until the management team is in place, the service managers appreciate the need to change working practices and this will be a key focus for the new management team. |
| 4 | Threat to corporate reputation | <p>There is a risk that if Joint Working fails to deliver the required outcomes or is seen as failing then the reputation of both Councils might be affected. This risk has been mitigated through the following measures:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sustaining the performance of services has been a key consideration of the feasibility study. Baseline costs and performance levels were determined and signed off by managers with hands on responsibility for the services and thus are properly understood The board has regular involvement to ensure challenge and make sure that where problems do occur, they are addressed quickly and effectively. This is backed up with regular communications to staff and stakeholders to ensure that negative perceptions do not spread |

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| 5 | <p>Loss of expertise resulting from staff leaving due to joint working</p> <p>NB beneficial longer term but not short term</p> | <p>If too many officers leave as a result of the uncertainty and disruption created by the process of moving to Joint Working it might be hard to recruit suitably skilled and experienced officers which in turn would cause issues within the service. The impact of this risk might be greater still given the officers that might find other jobs may also be those with the skills most needed for the new joint service. This risk has been mitigated through the following measures:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The project board has already recognised the potential for disruption and has made financial provision in the business case for the cost of mitigating it. Where necessary extra support or the backfilling of roles will be arranged. Business continuity planning will be undertaken • The outline staffing structure recognises people's need for variety and career progression, and further work will be done on this when designing new jobs and roles. The benefits of the new structure will be communicated to staff as part of the communications planning. The positive aspects of the change will be explained and attempts made to resolve any negative perceptions • All stakeholders have had involvement with the project, and the human and cultural aspects of the change are understood, and plans will be in place to deal with any potential conflicts |
| 6 | <p>Service falling over during transition</p> | <p>Evidence from previous project was that significant work is involved in moving towards the joint working service. If this is not carefully managed there is a risk that the service will fail in the short term. This risk has been mitigated through the following measures:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduction in scope of duties • Service standards in year one less than years two and three • Officers need to be given permission to not do things in order to make space • Other departments have been consulted and are willing to provide significant support (HR, Finance, Customer service) to ensure the project is successful |
| 7 | <p>People governing change have different agendas and are not united towards a common goal</p> | <p>Evidence from other shared service projects suggests that a significant factor in failing to drive through successful change is a unity of purpose and drive from senior managers and members. This risk has been mitigated through the following measures:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All stakeholders (members, managers, EH staff, HR, IT, Finance, customer services) have been consulted on the proposal at the outset in an open and honest discussion about its goals. This stakeholder engagement has highlighted a wide range of concerns and issues, which have been fed into the development of the proposal. • Clear that this commitment is in place and significant support for the achieving Joint working in the service is evident |
| 8 | <p>Poor communication between partners</p> | <p>Communication at an early stage in the project was found to be essential in the R&B work carried out previously. A change of this magnitude will impact upon all staff and it is essential that they have plenty of opportunity to understand what is happening. This risk has been mitigated through the following measures:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Effective communications plans and systems are in place. • The board overseeing the project is made up of senior officers from both Councils. • A communications plan will be developed using a range of media, and in consultation with the Councils' communications advisors |

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|----|---|---|
| 9 | Resistance to change among staff and other stakeholders | <p>This project has had a difficult beginning over 8 months with different approaches being explored. One of the negative impacts from this has been that there is clear resistance to change from staff and it is difficult (at project commencement) to separate the legitimate concerns from those based on a misunderstanding of why this project is happening. This risk has been mitigated through the following measures:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff to be involved at every stage and given the opportunity to ask questions • Change management meetings to take place throughout the project |
| 10 | Anomalies created by differential terms and conditions among staff makes harmonised working practices difficult | <p>One inevitable consequence of choosing to harmonise terms and conditions over two years is that staff doing the same job will be working to different terms and conditions. We know this is an issue from the R&B project (different pay scales, leave arrangements etc) so this will be an issue once we move to joint working. This issue will be managed through the following measures:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The project board is fully aware of this issue and intends to use a two year period where staff remain employed by their existing employers to provide adequate time to resolve any anomalies • Clarity with staff in advance of the merger and beyond that this is inevitable and that for a number of reasons this options has been chosen as preferable to the alternative (TUPE) |
| 11 | A focus on cost savings may mean that the IT infrastructure does not provide a real enabler for change | <p>Given the focus on savings and that Environmental Health Service costs are mostly in its people there is a real risk that in order to protect front line staff that any costs on set up would be minimised. This may lead to collective failing to explore the possibilities of joined up IT infrastructure and therefore be a missed (longer term) opportunity. This risk has been mitigated through the following measures:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • IT managers and staff are working with service professionals and consultants to ensure all opportunities are explored. It has been made clear that although savings are paramount any opportunity for longer term improvements would be properly considered by the board and any such proposals should be encouraged. • These issues have been fully considered as part of the technical exploration, this work has been carried out by senior IT managers and their teams • An understanding of the infrastructure that is needed to support collaborative working, both for in-scope projects, as well as more strategic enablement has been gained. The costs of change have been calculated, and the most appropriate model devised. |
| 12 | Contracts that need to be negotiated whilst the joint working project is underway may be adversely impacted | <p>Any ongoing contracts will be referred to the Board before sign off in the interim period. Some significant value contracts will be negotiated during this time including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dog kenneling – DBC £85K 3 years, due 1st July already in train. • Pest Control – DBC £36K per year, 1st August • AQ DBC – in Kent arrangements, April 2012 • SDC £24K annually (maintenance of AQ monitoring stations) due April 2012 • Scores on Doors - £1800 per annum, concludes June 2012 • Joint annual figure for Dartford and Sevenoaks in respect of NOX tubes is currently £6392. |

14. Conclusion

14.1 Assessment against criteria

The table below summarises the evaluation criteria and describes the current position based on the forward operating model.

| Agreed Criteria | Outcome |
|---|--|
| Capable of fulfilling statutory obligations | The service standards set out in this report are designed around meeting statutory obligations |
| £300K savings capable of full implementation by 2012/13 | This report details how the achievement of £300,000 savings per annum would be achieved while limiting the impact of the reduced service delivery. |
| Improve capacity and resilience compared with making the same cuts in the two individual services | The forward operating model has been designed to ensure sufficient capacity and flexibility. A larger team of officers brings increased resilience, capacity and a wider pool of skills, knowledge and experience. The new combined service will focus on achieving quality services to meet customer needs at the lowest possible cost. |
| Ability to meet agreed service standards | Processes will be re-designed to maintain service quality and concentrate on outcomes. This should result in services being delivered at a lower cost, but achieve the same ends for the customer. |
| Must have a single professional EH manager reporting to Head of Service/ Director | The service is designed to include a single professional Environmental Health Manager. This will make it easier to attract new partners to join the model down track (see criteria below) and ensure the service is self-contained. |
| £60k savings from 2015/16 by trading, sharing with a third party or further savings | The financial case has included further savings of £60,000 per annum, these savings are considered reasonable by the service manager and are linked to ambitions to find a third party for whom the partnership could carry out work or who could join the partnership albeit probably on different terms. |
| Ability for customers to access services to be the same or better than current | The Business Case does not affect the current local outposts. Access to services will remain substantially the same. In fact there will be some small improvement in access as customers currently only able to access services at their own Council will (under the new arrangements) be able to access services at both councils. |

14.2 Recommendation

The Project Team recommends progression to Implementation of this project based on:

- The most influential criterion (based on weightings attributed at the time) is, by some margin, the cashable annual revenue savings of £300K. Based on the outcomes from the feasibility study, this level of savings is achievable
- Other criteria including the continuing delivery of service to customers are considered achievable by the Project Team and Project Board
- Consultancy challenges (raised throughout the project) have all been resolved to an acceptable level
- No major issues were identified in key work streams such as implications for staff and customers, business support etc.
- The ICT plan covers all business requirements at an acceptable level of cost
- Risks as set out in section 13 of this report are reasonable and in most cases have an identified approach to mitigation. This ensures that the risks are commensurate with the potential rewards
- Agreement on key principles of governance including a 50:50 approach to sharing risks and rewards and agreed approach to harmonising terms and conditions
- Organisational structure and approach has been designed by officers who have the requisite expertise and ongoing involvement with the project
- Continuing political and executive support for the project and an undiminished requirement to achieve savings
- Fit with the wider political movement towards sharing service in the two Councils and allows for expansion.

15. Next Steps

This section briefly describes the particular activities that will be undertaken if Members approve the business case in order to commence implementation. The Board and Project team will work with consultants to draw up detailed route map and implementation plan for moving toward implementation of the forward operating model. This will include:

- Production of an implementation plan by service managers and staff
- Detailed project time-line
- Capacity planning exercise to ensure sufficient resources are available at the right times as the project moves forward