



**to: Scrutiny Committee Members**  
**from: Environmental Health 7 Licensing Staff**  
**tel:**  
**my ref:**  
**your ref:**  
**date: 08 December 2009**

**Memo**

Dear Cllr,

**Staff & Trade Unions response to :  
Worcestershire Enhanced Two Tier Working Business plan**

As you are aware members of the Scrutiny Committee are being asked to consider the above business plan on the 10<sup>th</sup> December 2009 which proposes the joining up of all Environmental Health Departments and Trading Standards in Worcestershire to form one service. It is envisaged that the transformation will provide an improved service which is cheaper and more resilient to the ebb & flow in service demands.

We the staff accept that a form of shared service is an inevitability in the future due to the continuing financial pressures on public services and for this reason, we do not oppose the concept.

On the 10 November 2009 the WETT team presented their business case to us. Since that time we have read and considered carefully the ramifications of the business plan and to this effect, we have produced the enclosed document which comprises a critique of the business plan.

Our concerns focus on simple and obvious criteria which we considered fundamental in the production of business plans and the associated risks involved with change : -

- Lack of Consultation with Staff, Elected members, Stakeholders, Citizens of Wyre Forest.
- Reduction of Staff to the lowest levels in the Country for Environmental Health
- Unacceptable numbers of Risks and business assumptions in the model
- Assumptions that the HUB will deliver a large proportion of services.
- The demotion of Elected members in policy & decisions making processes

We would therefore be grateful if members could consider carefully this report as part of there decision forming. In addition to this we request that the Scrutiny Committee give consideration to having a meeting with staff to discuss their concerns and given the same opportunities to put forward their concerns as the WETT team have had to date.

Yours faithfully  
**Staff of Environmental Health & Licensing**

**Planning & Regulatory Services**, Duke House, Clensmore Street  
Kidderminster  
Worcestershire  
DY10 2JX

Page Reference		Questions/issues to be raised	Outcome focus
Detailed Business Case	Exec Summary		
<b>Section A: Common across all Detailed Business Cases</b>			
		What project planning/management system has been used to put these proposals together? (eg Prince 2) What has worked with this process and what hasn't? What steps have been taken to deal with those that didn't work?	All
		What were the criteria for picking members of the project boards? How was this managed? What training/support have they received to enable them to carry out the task effectively? What work has been displaced to allow them to undertake this piece of work and how has this been managed?	Service improvement work flows, workforce planning
		What member involvement/oversight has there been to date and projected for the future? What are the implications of this eg move to a commissioning authority for services not hosted by WCC? (see detailed services below). The SLAs will be fundamental to operation (see below).	Governance, service improvement
		What risk assessment, evaluation and management methodology was used? SWOT is a good starting point (see appendices) so what else was done?	All
		All financial tables in the body of the report and appendices should be interrogated until there is confidence in the robustness of the figures put forward. How did these come about? Are they accurate as a baseline? Are they too cautious or optimistic for the projections? Are there any concerns about the different Councils' ability to match the figures proposed? What happens if one of them has got it wrong? What impact would this have on the short, medium, long-term viability of the project? Would concerns about finances alter hosting suggestions?	Cost savings
		How will the Councils carry out equality impact assessments on the shared services? Will this be individually by Council or as part of a co-ordinated operation? When will this be done and how will it be monitored/reported back to Council? How will results feed into service plans or LSAs?	Service delivery
		Are savings, ICT requirements, Hub demands etc being considered in silos or collectively across the whole 3 proposals? If they are linked, what impact would it have if one or more failed. If not, what improved outcomes could be obtained, or what increase in risk is there if they were linked?	All

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Detailed Business Case	Exec Summary		
		ICT support is fundamental to all proposals. The questions raised on the Internal Audit paper are relevant across all proposals and the sections concerning ICT should be interrogated robustly.	Cost savings, service improvement, work flows
		The impact on HR in dealing with these transfers must not be underestimated. Robust questioning of HR capacity and capability is required. Will additional resources be necessary? What impact will it have on the rest of the Council's HR dealings when so much time is given to this? Will this be co-ordinated across all 3 services & 7 Councils with one lead? Will this be outsourced?	Work flows, workforce planning
		What are the implications for the staffing levels throughout WCC if one or more of these services are shared?	workforce planning
		How are/will potential conflicts of interest be handled?	Service delivery
		How are the key performance targets to be put in place in the SLAs against which Councils will be able to judge performance being agreed? How will these then be managed by Officers and the host Executive? Will there be joint scrutiny of performance across Councils? How will disputes be resolved? How can members input into formulating the SLAs? How can they incorporate the consistency of processes described yet still include local flexibility to take into account variations of client groups?	Governance, service improvement, service delivery
		What is the implementation action plan for each proposal? (See Project Implementation for DBC V9 spreadsheet) The Gant chart is good start. How will it be project managed and reported? How will risk management and implementation be aligned? What will be the member oversight? What is the co-ordination between the three proposals if any? How is this complexity going to be managed and monitored?	All
<b>Section B</b>			
<b>Internal Audit</b>			
pg2 para4	pg3para3	How successful have current sharing arrangements been? What lessons from that experience can be applied to this proposal?	All
pg8 GP6	pg3para4	What account has been taken of the need to increase resources within City for set up?	cost savings ROI

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Detailed Business Case	Exec Summary		
pg8GP7		What working practices are common at present across all Councils?	Work flows
pg9 Timescale		Is any one bullet point more critical than the other? What's being done to manage the risk? At what point does this become unsustainable?	All
pg9 structure		Integration of working practices and cultures always a difficult thing to manage. What specific steps are being taken now and planned to ensure that there will be no deterioration in service during implementation?	Service delivery, work flows, work force planning
pg11	pg8	What is the risk breakdown (high,medium,low) against each point in the table which led to a decision to promote option 2 and then change to option 1? Why the change?	Service delivery
pgs12-14	pgs4-6	How robust are the assumptions provided? What scenario planning was undertaken to underpin these assumptions and therefore the proposal? What were the results of these scenarios?	Cost savings
pgs14-16	pgs6-7	How robust are the figures? Are there past or present issues with the Councils' financial projections? If so, have these been taken into account when calculating risk?	cost savings ROI
pg17		Why choose option 2? Where is the risk assessment against each option?	workforce planning
pg 17		With increased staff and transfer arrangements, what are the knock on effects of the increased demands on HR and their ability to support the rest of the Council? What difficulties are foreseen in harmonising working practices? What is being done to plan for this? What are the cost implications of knock-on effects and risk factors to the viability of the proposal and/or potential resource demands on the Council?	workforce planning
pg 18 para2		Appointment of WIASS manager appears to be a critical point in the project management. What steps are being taken to ensure this is met?	workforce planning
pg19Perf	pg10	Why choose these indicators?	service improvement
pg20	pg11	Audit Management System is a critical success factor for this proposal. Where is the scenario planning/risk assessment for this? What is IT/data compatability across Councils? Will this require further work - data cleansing for example with increased and unaccounted for costs? There has already been slippage (page 21 paras3-5)	All
pg21para2	pg12para1	Mention is made about additional revenue costs being offset by equivalent savings. What happens to the viability of the proposal and City's finances if they're not?	cost savings ROI
	pg12para3	Telephony is identified as a future risk. What are the projections for when this will be improved and at what cost?	cost savings ROI

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Detailed Business Case	Exec Summary		
pgs23-24		The risks highlighted in the proposal do not sufficiently address those already mentioned above. What other risks were left out?	All

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Detailed Business Case	Exec Summary		
<b>Property Services</b>			
pg4para1	pg2para1	This implies that the City Council will be one of a group of commissioning authorities. Do we have the skills for that, what impact will this have on the culture of the Council and governance arrangements?	Governance, service delivery, workforce planning
pg5para3	pg3para1	How exactly will this proposal meet the Audit Commission's "Room for Improvement"?	service improvement
pg5para4	pg3para1	How exactly will this proposal provide a more joined up approach to LAA?	service improvement
pg7para2		Transformational change link with timescales is high risk. What scenario planning has been done to deal with the "what if x doesn't happen"? What individual impact will it have on the project if any one of these things do not happen? Is one more critical than the other?	All
pg8para1	pg4 last para	What are the existing differences between Councils eg PIs? How does City compare? Will others come to our standards (or risk of descending to lowest common demonitator) or do we rise to theirs?	service improvement
pg11		Structure model - what is the rational behind this particular structure? How will this specifically improve service delivery and quality for City residents? What risk assessment has been taken of the advantages/disadvantages?	service improvement, workforce planning, work flows
pg13	pg8table	Why option 1? Risk assessment of responses?	Service delivery
pg14	pg8table	Option2 disadvantage: box 2 what is the proposed host authority's scheme of delegation? How does this compare to City's current scheme? Would any change be in the best interests of transparency & accountability, service delivery, quality?	Service improvement
pg15para1	pg5para1	If there is not the full transfer, what impact does this have?	All
pg15table	pg5 table	How robust are the figures? Are there past or present issues with all the Councils' financial projections? If so, have these been taken into account when calculating risk?	Savings
pg16para1	pg5lastpara	Reductions in recharges - what knock on effect could this have on the Council? Reduced staffing levels?	Savings, workforce planning
pg16bullet1	pg6bullet1	What is the quality of the City's current contractors compared to that currently used by the proposed host? How will performance be managed etc (see comment above regarding SLA)	Service improvement
	pg6 bullets	Can existing contracts be re-negotiated in the light of this?	Cost savings

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Detailed Business Case	Exec Summary		
page17para2	pg6lastpara	Rationalising and redeploying staff is this a County responsibility? No residual involvement by City?	workforce planning
pg17para3	pg7para1	Will the legal section be viable and what protocol will be in place for cross-authority working?	work flows, workforce planning
pg19para2	pg9para2	Was the previous experience of TUPE successful from all viewpoints? What lessons were learned from that that will be factored across to this exercise? If mistakes were made, what reassurances can be given, steps taken, to ensure those mistakes are not repeated? What happens if they are?	Workforce planning
page17para3	pg9para3	what happens if this is not formally agreed? What risk assessment has been taken of this scenario?	Workforce planning
pg19point2	pg9point2	Whose business plan & key objectives? If County's how do members influence that? How does the streamlined and efficient service proposed compare to City's current operations? How will it actually provide a better service to the Council as a customer and to residents?	Service improvement
pg19point3	pg9point3	What risk assessment has been undertaken in respect to a delay in agreeing the legal agreement. There are potentially a great number of variables in these negotiations.	All
pg20para5	pg10para3	Is the comment about the condition of the portfolio true for City? What implication does this have for City? Will its buildings be disadvantaged or not by this arrangements?	Service improvement
pg21para1	pg10para5	Issue matching funding with service aspirations. The expectation v reality problem both between LA staff groups, member groups and the public. Also potentially a culture issue. How will this be managed and communicated?	Service improvement, savings, ROI
	pg10para2	When rationalising the combined estate what is to be sold off and who decides? How do you deal with disputes? What specifically is the "lean thinking approach"?	Cost savings
pg21last para	pg11para9	The strain on LAs networks is high risk. What risk assessment has been undertaken of this failing to support new working arrangements & impact on service?	Service improvement, work flows
pg22para1	pg11para10	Figures supplied are too uncertain to make a firm business case. IT is notorious for slippage in dates and costs. What risk evaluation has been undertaken? (See questions above to relate to the whole ICT Section inc telephony)	Cost savings

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Detailed Business Case	Exec Summary		
pg23para2	pg12para2	What support is being provided to the staff who remain with City who will also need assurance, team building etc after the upheavels of reconfiguration?	Workforce planning
pg23-34	pg12	The implementation plan is slim in detail, timing, responsibility, risk assessment etc. When will a full implementation plan be produced?	All
pg24table	pg13table	Mitgations boxes 1: what is the existing level of risk? Box 2:which members? General: What is the impact on City if any of these do not occur regarding savings, quality, service improvement, work flows etc?	All
pg30table		Are there any concerns that these figures are not accurate?	Savings
pg32		Which of these assumptions are most critical to the success of the proposal? Which are the deal breakers?	All
pg36		What are the risk factors for these issues and how does that impact on the viability of the proposal?	All
<b>Regulatory Services</b>			
pg3lastpara		The financial element is taking precedence: at what detriment to improving performance and service to the public? (See page 22 below)	Savings, service improvement
pg5		What were the lessons learnt from other authorities and how were these applied?	All
pg6para4	pg3para3	Looking from the outside in is the right approach so how did they gather the view of customers and businesses to inform the proposal?	Service improvement
	pg2 bullet 5	How is City performing currently against NIs? How do they compare against others in the group? Will this proposal affect City's NIs positively or negatively?	Service improvement
pg6para1	pg3 para 2	What is LACORS view on integrated teams across authorities?	Service improvement
pg6para2	pg3 para 5	What impact will the Consumer White Paper 2009 have on the proposals? Will the proposed service be able to respond more effectively to the White Paper proposals?	Service improvement
pg7para3	pg3para7	A lot is being asked of the Hub by other services. What consideration has been given to the possible increased level of support required to take on these additional roles? What impact will it have on residents in relation to waiting times, quality of response etc?	Work flows, workforce planning
pg8para1		Potential cuts: is this based on urban myth, educated guesswork or clear direction from central government? (See pg21/22 below)	Savings

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Detailed Business Case	Exec Summary		
pg10para5	pg11para3	What specifically does "lean principles" mean in relation to this proposal?	Service improvement
pg11para1	pg11para4	Involving customers in service re-design. Good in principle so what's the track record of the Councils in involving customers to date? How do we compare? Who will take responsibility? What resources are to be allocated against this?	Service improvement
pg11para3		On-line self service - an adventurous proposal so how far down the line are we already? What investment is needed in terms of time, money, equipment, training, staff? Judge rhetoric against reality	Savings, service improvement
pg12para3/4	pg11para6/7	Reconfiguration of processes requires consensus and mapping against current methodologies. How far down the path are we on this? What examples have you got to prove effectiveness of any proposal?	Service improvement
pg12/13	pg12para1	A call for totally integrated transformational change which relies on many factors and therefore subject to high risk of non-completion. Has this scenario been accepted? Who is leading, championing this shift? What happens if s/he moves on? What about sustainability?	All
pg15bullets	pg4last para	Is there anything missing from this list of services, or anything that shouldn't be in the list that is there? If so for either, why? Are there any policy differences (eg sex shop licensing, taxi arrangements) that would hinder joint arrangements?	Service improvement
pg16para2		Variation in services - will identify core services & variations but then what? Will City benefit or be disadvantaged?	Service delivery workflows, work force planning
pg21/22	pg5para1	Option 3 seem to be based on a worst case scenario and predicating all options on assumption that cuts will be made within the service ie that the service will have no protection in the budget negotiations. What is this judgement based on?	Cost savings
pg25table	pg7para2	Preference is for option 1 (actually option A) Why? More responsive?	Service improvement
pg26para6	pg10	Central host appears to be Redditch & Bromsgrove (although County was first choice) but caveat about Audit Commission performance report. What are the implications of the AC report being less than supportive?	All
	pg8lastpara	What is the implication of the proposals on the legal teams? What is the impact on City staff as a whole on the potential changes and demands on legal service?	Work flows, workforce planning

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Detailed Business Case	Exec Summary		
pg27para6	pg9para2	This involves staff outside of TS, EH & Licensing in calculating costs, resources etc. Do they know this?	Workforce planning
pgs27-33	pgs5-6	See earlier comments about ensuring robustness of figures. In addition DBC pg30 penultimate para refers to pay bill. What differences would there be to cost and/or HR negotiations and risk of slippage between the Councils? In particular R&B v County?	Cost savings
pg32para1		2 high risk factors of early investment in ICT and fundamental service transformation. What are the implications of either of these slipping or failing?	All
pg33para1		What happens if they don't get grants for ICT capital investment?	Cost savings
pg33para3		What is City's position in relation to ability to meet funding contributions?	Cost savings
pg33lastpara		Is there a potential pensions time bomb that will impact on figures? What precautions have been taken?	Cost savings
pg34para5	pg7para2	Proposed using consultation model for R&B and Hub. What lessons have been learnt from that which will be used in this process?	Workforce planning
pg37para4 pg38para3	pg9para8	Perception of reduction in standards possible - would this be an actual reduction for City? How does City PIs compare against other authorities at present? If not compatible or leads to a perceived reduction, how is this to be managed and communicated?	Service improvement
pg39lastbullet pg40para1	pg12para1	ICT software timetable is ambitious and high risk. What are implications of not meeting timetable? What consideration has been given to ensuring compatibility of data, data cleansing etc and costs arising from that? There has already been some slippage.	All
pg41	pg13	Are members happy with the performance of the Hub to date? Does it have the future capacity for these proposals. What is the quality of their response to calls and what are the statistics regarding resolution of queries and any customer complaints? (See Appendix 8)	Service delivery workflows, work force planning
pg49para2	pg14para5	What else will be included in the implementation plan? How will members be able to track progress?	All
pg52-55	pg15-16	Good as far as it goes. What other risk management/assessment/planning processes will be put in place? What scenarios have been played & timed responses planned?	All

Page Reference		Questions/issues to be raised	Outcome focus
Detailed Business Case	Exec Summary		
Appendix5		How robust are the Councils' performance and workload data collection systems? Are they well maintained? Can the data be trusted sufficiently across the Councils to base the projections upon them?	Work flows, workforce planning
Appendix6		Contaminated land is a highly resource intensive area and one site can impact severely on projected budgets. City have not yet undertaken survey of sites. Are all sites identified throughout the other Councils? What impact could City's non-identification have on the proposal?	Work flows, workforce planning
AppendixF1		Which of these financial assumptions are most critical to the success of the proposal? Which are the deal breakers?	Cost savings



**to: Scrutiny Committee Members**  
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**Memo**

Dear Cllr,

**IDEA (The Centre for Public Scrutiny) Response to :  
Worcestershire Enhanced Two Tier Working Business plan**

As you are aware members across Worcestershire are being asked to consider the above business plan which proposes the joining up of all Environmental Health Departments and Trading Standards in Worcestershire to form one service. It is envisaged that the transformation will provide an improved service which is cheaper and more resilient to the ebb & flow in service demands.

As part of this process Worcestershire City Council Scrutiny Committee chair sent a copy of the WETT business plan to the Centre for Public Scrutiny (CfPS) for their consideration.

CfPS have commented on the WETT business case and have highlighted concerns and made recommendations.

A copy of this report has been sent to Wyre Forest for information, as the detail is considered common to both authorities. Please find enclosed a copy of this report and fact sheet on CfPS for your information.

Yours faithfully  
**Staff of Environmental Health & Licensing**

**Planning & Regulatory Services**, Duke House, Clensmore Street  
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## Briefing Note: WETT Proposals for Internal Audit, Property Services and Regulatory Services, Worcester City Council

The attached framework has been put together to support member evaluation of the WETT proposals. It is not a comprehensive analysis of the business case, nor is it prescriptive in the areas to be investigated or the questions to be asked. It has been designed to provide a starting point of analysis in what is a very complex and potentially far reaching set of proposals.

The documents used to support the development of the framework were:

- The detailed business cases (DBC), with appendices, and executive summary of the proposals for Internal Audit, Property and Regulatory Services
- Report to Worcester City Council Cabinet, July 2009
- Presentations to members in July and November 2009
- Members briefing 14 July 2009 and WETT programme newsletter

It is essential that the OSC focus should be on the outcomes required by Council. The investigation should therefore determine whether the proposals in their current form support the achievement of those outcomes. The framework lists some areas of investigation that members may like to consider.

For the purposes of this framework it has been agreed with Cllr Geoff Williams, that the outcomes should be:

1. Service Improvement and increased efficiency. It should focus on:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Quality of service</li> <li>• Service delivery</li> <li>• Assessment of impact on citizens (EqIA)</li> <li>• Work flows</li> <li>• Sustainability</li> </ul>
2. Cost savings and return on investment. It should focus on:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Direct savings</li> <li>• Long-term savings</li> <li>• Investing to save</li> </ul>
3. Centralised Service Delivery. It should focus on:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Governance</li> <li>• Workforce planning</li> <li>• Infrastructures</li> <li>• Resilience of remaining services</li> </ul>

Turning to the framework itself, section A relates to:

- a) Information required in order to come to a conclusion as to the robustness of the project methodology used
- b) Specific topics such as finance, HR, risk management which are relevant to all three proposals

section B deals with each service area in turn.

The framework provides:

- For the individual services, page references for the DBC and Executive Summary, cross referenced where possible. In some instances the Executive summary has insufficient detail and reference to the DBC is required to gain a better understanding of the reasoning behind the suggested investigation.
- The suggested questions/issues to be considered
- The outcome(s) to which these investigations relate. In some instances the area of investigation will cover more than one outcome. Some will cover all of the outcomes.

Members should perhaps consider this with two perspectives: the first being a sub-regional strategic approach to investigating the overall viability of the proposals for the residents in the wider area; the second to focus on issues specific to Worcester City services and residents. For example, within the Internal Audit section one question is raised thus, *“Mention is made about additional revenue costs being offset by equivalent savings. What happens to the viability of the proposal and City's finances if they're not?”*

Transforming any service is a complex process and members may require more than one assessment of the proposals put forward. As a result, members may also wish to consider the outcomes required for their OSC meeting. They may wish this to form part of the scoping process and/or recommend to Cabinet particular actions or areas for further investigation.

Laura Murphy  
CfPS Associate

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#### **For information:**

CfPS have a number of documents which have been published to support OSC in their investigations available from [www.cfps.org.uk](http://www.cfps.org.uk) The latest publications are:

Successful scrutiny 2009” – shortlisted / award winners from the conference this year  
“Small print, big picture” – scrutiny of shared services  
“Take your partners” (co-produced by the IDeA) – scrutiny of partners and CAA