

Transfer of Services Working Party (SLCF)

Teams Meeting, 11th April 2024, 3pm

Those present: R Hailstone (Chairman), A Reeves (Central North Swindon), M Lucas (Central North Swindon), Clair Wilkinson (Chiseldon), John Hewer (Wroughton), E Freemantle (Wroughton), C McEwen (South Marston), G Wilson (Liddington), J Mee (South Swindon), D Griffiths (South Swindon), G Hawkes (Covingham), I Jankinson (Blunsdon)

Also present: L Cutter (Secretary), S Iles (SBC's Interim Director of Operations), Councillor Jim Grant (SBC Labour Group Leader/ Cabinet Member for Communities and Joint Working)

1. Councillor Richard Hailstone welcomed the meeting and gave a quick recap on the previous meeting content for this Working Party. The financial information and resourcing detail are still pending from Swindon Borough Council (SBC), which is required for parishes to consider taking on services from SBC, with effect from October 2024.
2. Councillor Jim Grant gave an update on personnel changes within SBC and introduced Steve Iles as the Interim Director of Operations. The Parish Liaison Officer has recently been promoted into another role. SBC has recognised the importance of this role, so a replacement will be found, in the meantime enquiries can go via Steve Iles and/or Sam Mowbray. Members acknowledged the updates, but expressed the communications surrounding this were not forthcoming and caused confusion/unrest, especially as a lot of time and work has gone in to getting the projects and joint collaborations this far.
3. It is possible that there will be a delay in transferring services to April 2025, although this is yet to be agreed by cabinet, due to the tight timescales. SBC will continue with the services up until then.
4. Steve Iles introduced himself and gave an update on the progress he has made within a short period to show the commitment that he has to the parishes and understands the importance of getting the information right and effective communication. Steve has set up a Project Team within the Borough Council which consists of the Finance Officer and Lead Officers from the service, legal and Human Resources. Steve and the project team will investigate which services are to be transferred and whether these are statutory or non-statutory obligations and get to the detail of the information that is required. Steve gave confidence that the Project Team will continue to drive this forward and that the whole process is not beginning again.
5. Members also need to know the requirements for TUPE staff to meet the legal requirements and timescales associated with this. If the service is being transferred, the Staff allocated to that service will be part of the package and the council has an obligation to consult with them.
6. Steve Iles confirmed that the Parish Deeds will need to be reviewed and updated to take account of any changes should additional services transfer .
7. Councillor Jim Grant acknowledged there is still some practical work still to be done on the Protocol and split the appendices into smaller working groups to focus on categories such as Planning, Communications, etc.
8. Steve Iles and Councillor Jim Grant advised there was a another Project Meeting set for 30th April 2024 agreed to present any updates ready to review prior to the Swindon Local Councils Forum meeting which is due to be held on Thursday 23rd May 2024.