

COUNCIL MEETING – 21 January 2016

Recommendation to Council from the Executive meeting held on 1 December 2015

E/15/67. Shared Legal Services

The Executive considered a report from the Executive Member for Corporate Resources that set out the existing provision of legal services and proposed a move to a shared services model. The report explained the variants of shared services and set out the benefits and potential risks of each option.

The report also considered the practicalities of moving to a shared service model in the context of this Council and made recommendations as to the particular variants most likely to deliver savings and service benefits in the shortest timescales.

In response to questions, the Executive Member for Corporate Resources explained that if Central Bedfordshire Council wanted to take legal action against another council appropriate 'Chinese walls' would be in place within the proposed shared service arrangement. Sharing of services would achieve efficiencies as the Council would be able to use the knowledge of all employees in the partnership rather than paying for specialist external expertise. Central Bedfordshire would become a joint owner within the proposed partnership. Monitoring the performance of the proposed partnership would be carried out by the Corporate Resources Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

Reason for decision: To enable the Council to deliver the financial savings without impacting upon service levels.

RESOLVED

- 1. that the content of the report and its appendices, including the proposal to deliver £240k savings in the service area in 2016/17 financial year, be noted;**
- 2. that the establishment of a shared services arrangement with another local authority(s) for the provision of legal services for CBC, involving the potential TUPE transfer of CBC staff to a separate legal vehicle subject to the necessary staff consultation process being undertaken, be approved in principle; and**
- 3. to authorise the Director of Improvement and Corporate Services, in consultation with the Executive Member for Corporate Resources to:-**

- (a) devise and undertake a process for selection of a suitable partner for CBC for the purpose of establishing a shared service;**
- (b) agree the terms on which CBC shall enter into the shared service arrangement with the partner; and**
- (c) sign off any relevant agreements to formalise the arrangement.**

RECOMMENDED to Council

to authorise the delegation of CBC legal services functions to a shared services provider in order to facilitate a shared legal service arrangement.