

Report to Council 19 July 2022

Report of Cabinet 13 June 2022

Cabinet met on 13 June 2022. The full minutes are published on the council's website.

The following members were present at the meeting:

Present: Mayor Taylor (Chair)
Councillor Dychton (Deputy Mayor and Portfolio Holder for Community)
Councillor Pattinson (Portfolio Holder for Housing and Wellbeing)
Councillor Stotesbury (Portfolio Holder for Transport and Sustainability)
Councillor Williams (Portfolio Holder for Neighbourhood Services)

Also present: Councillor Nigel Bell, Leader of the Labour Group

The following was a recommendation to Council:

8. Shared Services

Cabinet received a report of the Executive Head of Commercial Finance and Innovation which included the business cases for the proposed shared services. It was noted that the business cases were exempt from publication due to the commercially sensitive nature of the content. The Mayor reminded members that if they wished to discuss any of the individual business cases and the details were not contained in the officer's report then the motion to exclude press and public would need to be moved.

The Mayor informed Cabinet that he and Councillor Watkin had been involved in the discussions about the new shared services. He referred to the success of the existing shared services with Three Rivers District Council which had provided resilience and a cost effective way of delivering services. He stated that Three Rivers District Council could join the new shared services at a later date if they wished. The format provided a clear governance structure by using the lead authority model.

The Executive Head of Commercial Finance and Innovation added that a lot of work had taken place to get to this stage. It was hoped that shared services could be expanded further in the future.

The Mayor emphasised that although cost was part of the reason for doing shared services, it was also about the resilience of a service.

Councillor Stotesbury commented that it was also about ensuring officers were available throughout the year. A big positive of shared services was the robustness of a service. The council already had examples of good experiences of the existing shared services with Three Rivers District Council.

In response to a question from Councillor Bell about the estimated savings, the Mayor advised that the information in the report was a conservative estimate. The Executive Head of Commercial Finance and Innovation said that once the teams were working together it may be possible that additional savings could be identified, through more efficiencies. There was a small saving in year 2 and this would build as the teams gained more resilience and they identified potential revenue raising opportunities.

There were no direct questions regarding the business cases for each of the new shared services.

RESOLVED –

that Cabinet unanimously recommends to Council:

1. the creation of a shared Planning Enforcement service between Watford Borough Council and St Albans City and District Council with the aim to go live from 1 September 2022, with Watford Borough Council as the lead authority.
2. the creation of a shared Building Control service between Watford Borough Council and St Albans City and District Council with the aim to go live from 1 September 2022, with Watford Borough Council as the lead authority.
3. the creation of a shared Legal service between Watford Borough Council and St Albans City and District Council with the aim to go live from 1 January 2023, subject to the appointment of a Head of Legal Service, with St Albans City and District Council as lead authority.