

BABERGH DISTRICT COUNCIL and MIDSUFFOLK DISTRICT COUNCIL

<u>FROM:</u> Director of Corporate Services	<u>REPORT NUMBER:</u> L4
<u>TO:</u> COUNCIL	<u>DATE OF MEETING:</u> 19 May 2011

BACKGROUND

In September 2010 Babergh and Mid Suffolk District Councils agreed to integrate the staff and services across the two Councils during 2011, and to merge the two Councils into one new Council in 2013 - the latter being subject to the outcome of a public poll and agreement by the Secretary of State.

The Babergh – Mid Suffolk integration and merger programme seeks to deliver benefits and savings arising from economies of scale, sharing of assets and resource in teams, sharing of senior managers, pooling of scarce skills and expertise, increased capacity and resilience to deliver services to the community, and reductions in the cost of democracy. In summary:

- Efficiency savings
- Increased resilience
- Increased performance
- Increased (local) strategic capacity
- A new model for locality working

Both Councils agreed that value for money for council tax payers should be the paramount objective, and that any programme of strategic integration should aim to achieve a jointly agreed balance between financial savings and future resilience in all aspects of service delivery.

As part of the governance arrangements, both Councils agreed that a Joint Scrutiny Committee would be set up.

OBJECTIVES

- To keep the overall Implementation Plan and Business Case under review.
- To keep proposals under review from a customer perspective.

Specifically to:

- Review whether the Implementation Plan is being implemented in accordance with its timescales, phases and costs. To scrutinise remedial action in place to deal with any slippage or variances.
- Review whether the benefits (especially savings) set out in the Business Case are being realised.

- As necessary set up customer panels, focus groups or other arrangements to secure effective stakeholder engagement in developing key elements of the Implementation Plan. This will build on the various stakeholder engagement mechanisms already in place.

The Committee has no decision-making powers, but is able to call the Joint Member Implementation Board (JMIB), Executive and Strategy Committees to account on matters related to this project. It can also make recommendations to the JMIB, Executive and Strategy Committees or direct to both Full Councils as appropriate.

MEMBERSHIP

A politically balanced committee of 10 Members (five from each Council) who are not on the Strategy or Executive committees. Members will be appointed for a term of one year at the Annual Council meetings.

The committee will be co-chaired by a Member from each authority, elected at the Councils' Annual Council meetings. The meeting will be chaired by the chairman of the host authority, with the venue being alternated between Babergh and Mid Suffolk.

FREQUENCY OF MEETINGS

As appropriate.