

**CYNGOR SIR POWYS COUNTY COUNCIL**

**PORTFOLIO HOLDER'S DECISION**

**19<sup>th</sup> August 2010**

**REPORT AUTHOR: Councillor Geraint Hopkins  
Portfolio Holder for Local & Environmental Services**

**SUBJECT: Shared Service: Ceredigion & Powys Streetworks**

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**REPORT FOR: Decision**

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**1.0 Summary**

- 1.1 The purpose of the report is to ensure continuity of the streetwork management function for Powys, Ceredigion and the Mid Wales Trunk Road Agency whilst the feasibility of a sharing the service is examined.

**2.0 Proposal**

- 2.1 The aim of the proposal is to merge best practice between both authorities, to revise existing practice to align with changes in legislation, and to establish the feasibility of joint working for the streetworks function as a shared service between Ceredigion and Powys.
- 2.2 The specific proposal is to provide continuity of the streetworks activity whilst establishing the feasibility of joint and shared working between Ceredigion and Powys through the appointment, for a temporary period (12-18 months), of an Interim Joint Streetworks Manager.

**3.0 Options Considered/Available**

- 3.1 Implementation of the proposal is facilitated by retirement of the Streetworks Manager in Ceredigion. The shortfall in staffing has been covered by Ceredigion on a temporary basis, but this is seen to be unsustainable in the longer term.
- 3.2 A bi-lateral arrangement (Powys' manager charged out to Ceredigion) is not favoured by Ceredigion, and offers less benefit to Powys than the preferred arrangement for joint working.

**4.0 Preferred Choice and Reasons**

- 4.1 Joint working for streetworks provides a good opportunity to realise part of the service efficiency being sought by both Councils.

- 4.2 By joint working, both authorities will have opportunity to develop and demonstrate expertise which supports good practice in highway maintenance, and which is particularly important to the management of utility company works on a consistent basis through out the region and on Trunk routes through urban areas.
- 4.3 Implementation of legislation intended primarily for congested urban areas (e.g. permit schemes and overrun charges for works) can be managed more effectively for our rural constituencies by means of a consistent cross-authority approach.
- 4.4 There appears also to be scope to add value to streetworks functionality in terms of improved co-ordination (e.g. for work associated with economic development – wind farms / fibre speed for broadband etc.)
- 4.5 A joint working arrangement for streetworks at the present time, will allow the practicalities of joint working arrangements to be better understood and the benefits to be scaled-up as the governance model for a wider array of services becomes further established.

#### **5.0 Sustainability and Environmental Issues/Equalities/Crime and Disorder/Welsh Language/Other Policies etc.**

- 5.1 Experience to date, in Ceredigion, does serve to demonstrate problems which may arise when a service run with minimal resource is subject to further reduction. A similar problem is known to exist with part of the Powys service – and we know it should be possible to offset this by joint working, sharing of resource and maintaining a critical mass necessary to run a professional streetworks function.

#### **6.0 Local Member(s)**

- 6.1 No local issues are expected to arise and consequently no views have been sought.

#### **7.0 Other Front Line Services**

- 7.1 The proposal will support retention of specialist support necessary for delivery of local environmental services as part of the asset based service programmes for both councils

#### **8.0 Support Services (Legal, Finance, HR, ICT, Admin Services)**

- 8.1 No specific issues arise. It is anticipated the involvement of support services will be through overall arrangements for shared service.

## **9.0 Local Service Board/Partnerships/Stakeholders etc**

9.1 The proposals have the support of the Mid Wales Trunk Road Agency provided of course there is no deterioration in Service standard i.e. management of utility companies working on the Trunk Road network.

## **10.0 Communications**

10.1 Utility companies are important stakeholders for streetwork purposes – so, it will be necessary to review authorities' processes in order to ensure good communications are maintained particularly during any changes that are required to realise any economies of scale of operation.

10.2 Street work operations are heavily dependent on information management. The data held does lend itself well to use for other purposes for example, delay notification. This may be examined further in the context of joint working (e.g. Customer relations management & budgeting highway works).

## **11.0 Statutory Officers**

11.1 The Strategic Director, Finance & Infrastructure (Section 151 Officer) and the Strategic Director, Law & Governance (Monitoring Officer) have no comments to offer on the proposal.

<b>Recommendation:</b>	<b>Reason for Recommendation:</b>
<b>That an interim appointment is confirmed for a joint Streetworks Manager to establish the feasibility of an on-going shared service for streetworks.</b>	<b>To realise greater efficiency and coordination of the Streetworks function across the Mid Wales region.</b>

<b>Relevant Policy (ies):</b>			
<b>Within Policy:</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>Within Budget:</b>	<b>Yes</b>

<b>Relevant Local Member(s):</b>	
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<b>Person(s) To Implement Decision:</b>	Steve Holdaway - Powys County Council Huw Morgan – Ceredigion County Council
<b>Date By When Decision To Be Implemented:</b>	

<b>Contact Officer Name:</b>	<b>Tel:</b>	<b>Fax:</b>	<b>Email:</b>
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### **Background Papers used to prepare Report:**

Further detail and background is available from Mo Abraham