

# Appendix A

## Service delivery in a unitary Ipswich authority

### Introduction

This appendix provides information on the outcomes of the Council's consideration of the 12 service areas that will need to be addressed. It is important to note that the information contained in the rest of this appendix are short individual summaries drawing out headline messages from detailed work in each area.

Each of the summaries for the 12 service areas are structured as follows:

1. *Summary of range of services addressed within the identified service area;*
2. *Strategies and opportunities for improved service delivery;*
3. *Issues that would need to be resolved and initial proposals to resolve them;*
4. *Likely cost implications of a unitary authority;*
5. *What form of transitional arrangements would be required;*
6. *Conclusion.*

The new unitary Ipswich council will seek to provide value for money services. This will be achieved through:

- ◆ Development of shared services and partnerships;
- ◆ Empowerment and devolution of services to ensure they are tailored to meet individual and community need;
- ◆ Transformation of business processes; and
- ◆ Effective procurement.

### Service Area: Children's Services

#### ***Summary of range of services addressed within the identified service area***

The range of services that need to be covered are:

- ◆ Education services not normally funded through the Dedicated Support Grant
- ◆ Children's Social Services
- ◆ Other

In terms of other functions, the following aspects have been considered in the context of this section: the Every Child Matters agenda, school transport and the link to other public sector, local authority and partner organisation services.

The vast majority of existing children's services are currently the responsibility of Suffolk County Council.

#### ***Strategies and opportunities for improved service delivery***

There are a large number of areas that a new unitary Ipswich council could choose to focus on within the umbrella of Every Child Matters. However, the following three areas are considered to be of particular importance:

- ◆ The establishment of a school improvement team to provide experienced well

qualified and timely expertise to work in partnership with schools to ensure that educational needs are fully met and integrated into the working and ethos of the new unitary Ipswich council. This is particularly important as levels of attainment on admission, at the end of each key stage and post-16 in large parts of Ipswich are lower than the county and national averages;

- ◆ Education welfare and family liaison to help schools deal with issues such as attendance and English as an additional language. This is, in part, to recognise the added challenges that Ipswich faces in terms of its identified higher levels of deprivation than the rest of Suffolk. There are opportunities for significantly closer working with services such as housing, leisure and community safety both across the town and within neighbourhoods.

- ◆ Maximising opportunities associated with the Building Schools for the Future programme to ensure early investment in Ipswich's secondary schools.

### ***Issues that would need to be resolved and initial proposals to resolve them***

Five specific issues have been identified that the new unitary Ipswich council will focus on:

- ◆ Improving educational attainment at all levels through the establishment and further investment in a school improvement team, EAL support, enhanced educational welfare and family liaison support and focused Building Schools for the Future investment. It is also proposed to establish an Education Services Management Board to oversee the council's work on all matters associated with education;

- ◆ Improving business and support services to schools such as HR, Finance, Legal, and support and training for Governors. The council will work with schools during the transition period to establish the range and types of services required. Options for service delivery will need to be considered, evaluated and implemented to ensure smooth transition arrangements.

- ◆ The unitary Ipswich council will be acutely aware of its responsibility and risk in relation to vulnerable children. It will seek good transitional planning with Suffolk County Council and other partners and flexibility of working arrangements in the early stages of its new unitary status.

- ◆ Providing appropriate child protection and safeguarding services through a very careful transitional process with the Suffolk Safeguarding Children Board, with some functions either in partnership or as part of a separate Ipswich Safeguarding Children Board. In particular, it will be necessary to set up inter-agency arrangements where there are opportunities for further integration of local authority services in social care, education, leisure and housing as well as working more closely with other key partners, e.g. health, police and voluntary organisations.

- ◆ Responsibilities and services for looked-after children is a major challenge for any new unitary authority in terms of partnership working with other statutory and voluntary sector organisations, boundary relationships associated with the likely transient nature of some of the children involved and the current location of a large proportion of the foster care resources in relation to Ipswich.

◆ Assessing and budgeting for risks and contingencies associated with children's social services and in particular to take account of fluctuations in costs that are outside an authority's direct control (e.g. placement costs, variations in numbers of looked-after children and the special educational needs of some children, their families and carers). Robust governance arrangements are essential, along with the ability to attract and retain highly competent and experienced employees.

### ***Likely cost implications of a unitary authority***

Of all the services identified this area is likely to have the greatest cost implications for the new unitary Ipswich authority. This is for three main reasons:

- ◆ It is an area that Ipswich Borough Council has identified as needing further investment, over and above the level the county council currently invests in Ipswich, particularly in education services.
- ◆ The significant costs associated with children's social services issues mean that this area is likely to command a substantial part of the new unitary authority's budget.
- ◆ The issue of risks and contingencies associated with children's social services.

### ***What form of transitional arrangements would be required***

As this would be a substantial service for the new unitary Ipswich authority to run it is inevitable that there will be substantial transition costs associated with it. Indeed it is considered important to focus on transitional arrangements in this area as it is considered that up-front investment in planning these services will result in better services and lower costs in the longer term.

The key areas identified are:

- ◆ Putting in place a shadow management structure for children's services (including at director and portfolio-holder level).
- ◆ Obtaining quality information on existing needs, commitments and provider arrangements for children's social services at an area and an individual basis.
- ◆ Involving all schools in the planning of service provision and budgets associated with the new unitary Ipswich authority.
- ◆ Establishing appropriate information technology systems that relate not just to children's services in Ipswich but also are integrated with the provision of other key services such as leisure and housing, and closely aligned with police and health information systems.
- ◆ Ensure there is effective continuity of business and other support services for schools during the transition period.

The extent to which the above is challenging, and arguably costly, will depend, in part, on the level of co-operation that Suffolk County Council would give in the eighteen months up to the commencement of the new unitary Ipswich council. Part of that relates to the quality of the information the county council has and/or will be prepared to make available. Ipswich Borough Council hopes that a positive relationship between the two authorities would minimise any transitional costs.

## **Conclusion**

Children's services are a major part of any unitary authority's budget and would involve significant transitional work and costs.

In particular, Ipswich has particular educational needs and challenges that are distinct from the challenges facing much of the rest of Suffolk. The new unitary Ipswich council will provide an opportunity to focus on these needs and challenges.

We will invest substantially in this area during any transitional period. This will ensure the service is delivered to a high standard from the first day of the unitary authority. We recognise that up-front investment is likely to save money in the longer term and limit the unforeseen risks and associated costs that may arise without appropriate planning.

## **Service Area: Highways, Roads and Transport**

### ***Summary of range of services addressed within the identified service area***

The range of services that need to be covered are:

- ◆ Maintenance and street services
- ◆ Parking

As a result, issues associated with other elements such as transport strategy matters and public transport have not been included within this section. However the Borough Council believes that those two functions could be run effectively and efficiently within a unitary Ipswich council.

It is important to note that Ipswich Borough Council is in an unusual position for a district council in terms of the provision of the identified Highways, Roads and Transport Services. The Borough Council has a full Highways Agency Agreement with Suffolk County Council for highway maintenance and street services (with some very limited exemptions) as well as a separate agency agreement covering the whole of the Borough in terms of Decriminalisation of Parking Enforcement. Ipswich Borough Council is solely responsible for the provision, pricing and operations of all local authority off-street parking.

In addition, Ipswich Borough Council is also unusual in that it has historically maintained a small team of dedicated public transport officers, owns and operates the town's main urban bus station and retains 100% ownership of the local bus company - Ipswich Buses Ltd.

### ***Strategies and opportunities for improved service delivery***

Many of the opportunities directly associated with these services already occur in Ipswich due to the agency arrangements that are already in place. However, the Council believes there are further opportunities for enhanced service delivery for Highways, Roads and Transport Services. These relate to:

- ◆ Developing a fully integrated transport team to cover all highways, roads and transport service along with transport strategy issues and all public transport matters.

- ◆ Developing an integrated passenger transport function which brings together the requirements of other key services such as adult social care and education.
- ◆ There would be real benefits in a Highways, Roads and Transport Service being part of an authority that also includes the full range of Highway Authority functions and planning and development, economic development, education and other aspects of local authority functions relevant to the development and growth agenda.

***Issues that would need to be resolved and initial proposals to resolve them***

In the context of the services referred to in this section there are no major issues that would need to be resolved as part of the commencement of a unitary Ipswich authority. However, there are two broader issues that are important:

- ◆ The creation of a structure that includes all transport functions within the Council's management and service structures. Ipswich Borough Council's recent management restructure decisions are likely to aid this.
- ◆ The potential for alternative forms of procurement for highway related services. This issue is not however specifically relevant to the move towards a unitary council since it is an issue that would be relevant whether a two-tier or a unitary authority structure is in place.

***Likely cost implications of a unitary authority***

There are no particular costs associated with these services within a unitary Ipswich council since the Council currently manages and operates these services on behalf of the County Council. The main unknown relates to the amount of funding that would be secured for these services within a unitary Ipswich authority.

The council is confident that it could deliver the entire Highways, Roads and Transport Service that would be required for a unitary Ipswich council at the same or less cost than is currently spent on the service in Ipswich combined with any reasonable Ipswich proportion of Suffolk Highways, Roads and Transport Service income and expenditure. The techniques outlined on page 1 of this appendix will be used to drive up efficiency and reduce costs where possible.

***What form of transitional arrangements would be required***

Assuming the Highways Agency Agreement remains in place until the commencement of the unitary Ipswich authority it is not thought that there would be any need for significant transitional arrangements or costs. It would be the Borough Council's intention to extend, if required, the Highways Agency Agreement with the County Council until a new unitary Ipswich council commences – the agreement currently lasts until 31 March 2009 and therefore any extension would be, at most, for a very limited period.

The wider package of transport services that upper-tier local authorities also provide and/or are responsible for mean a new unitary Ipswich council would take on service responsibilities for areas it does not currently cover (e.g. transport policy). However, the council is confident that existing structures could be amended to incorporate these areas with little or no transitional costs particularly as the Local Transport Plan (LTP) is in place until 2011 and therefore, assuming that LTP applied to Ipswich between 2009 and 2011, there is time for a separate Ipswich LTP to be produced for the 2011 to 2016 period after the commencement of a unitary Ipswich council.

New information technology systems will need to be put in place since currently the council has limited components of Suffolk County Council's systems. This issue has been accounted for within the financial costings.

As can be evidenced from the above, it is not thought that there will need to be major transitional arrangements for this service area.

### **Conclusion**

A unitary authority will provide some opportunities for savings and/or service improvements through the techniques highlighted on page 1 of this appendix. However this is not a service area that will face major changes solely as a result of the change to a unitary authority. This is fundamentally due to the agency agreements that are already in place.

The main opportunities in this area arise out of the integration of services within a single authority, the focus the authority would have on Ipswich and the enhanced strategic decision making that that would allow.

### **Service Area: Adult Social Care**

#### ***Summary of range of services addressed within the identified service area***

Currently, adult social care is a county council function.

#### ***Strategies and opportunities for improved service delivery***

The new unitary Ipswich council will focus on the following three areas:

◆ Wellbeing in terms of the entire Ipswich community: The fact that all responsibilities and functions would be incorporated within one council would provide real opportunity to maximise the wellbeing of the people of Ipswich. Ensuring that leisure, economic development, housing, transport and social care are properly integrated at a strategic level, and around the individual needs of a person or family, will be a priority for the new authority. In addition, the intention would be to appoint a joint Director of Public Health with the Primary Care Trust who would lead on health inequalities and well being issues in Ipswich as a key part of his or her role.

◆ Individual care and support plans drawn up with people and their carers that relate to people's needs across the full range of public sector services: the integration of services will provide substantially enhanced flexibility in this regard and facilitate the Government's drive for self-directed support. A key part of this will be the opportunity to provide a one-stop shop assessment of individual people's needs in relation to the totality of possible service responses across the public, private, not-for-profit and voluntary sectors along with consistent eligibility criteria for access to services.

◆ Meeting the inclusivity agenda by ensuring that mainstream services are fully accessible to all sectors of the community.

Key issues for Ipswich arising from the above would relate to the approach taken to the planning, commissioning and procurement of services and the opportunities that an urban unitary would bring to locate services in close proximity to people and to

reflect the urban nature of Ipswich's social care needs, where deprivation is a significant issue and there are disproportionate pressures in relation to mental health, substance misuse, support to asylum-seekers and refugees and other socially marginalised groups compared with other parts of Suffolk.

### ***Issues that would need to be resolved and initial proposals to resolve them***

The key issues that would need to be resolved relate to:

- ◆ Ensuring a seamless and effective integration of services. The intention would be to address this at a number of levels – in partnership with the Primary Care Trust (as exemplified by proposals for a joint Director of Public Health), at senior management level by a director and portfolio-holder with responsibility which include adult social care and housing remits and at frontline level with a one-stop assessment of an individual's needs.
- ◆ The approach that will be taken to commissioning services, the role of direct delivery of services where and if appropriate and the approach to third sector organisations. A strong supportive approach to the policy contribution, advocacy and service provision role of the voluntary sector organisations supporting families and carers will be a cornerstone of this. We will focus on individual needs and the increasing emphasis on individual budgets and self-directed support. There will be a clear policy framework to the local authority's commissioning and procurement roles.
- ◆ It is important that changes in council funding arrangements for the voluntary and community sectors do not destabilise their ability to provide key services. We will work with Suffolk County Council and relevant voluntary and community organisations to resolve any such issues.

### ***Likely cost implications of a unitary authority***

The adult social care budget of any top-tier or unitary authority is likely to be a substantial portion of that authority's budget. This will inevitably be the case in Ipswich.

However, the council is confident that it can deliver adult social care for a unitary Ipswich council at an equivalent cost to that currently spent on adult social care in Ipswich. There might be a potential for savings through the rationalisation of overlapping housing, social care and supporting people functions and services. There are also links between this and levels of funding from other agencies, e.g. the health sector.

Clearly at a time when all authorities are looking for Gershon savings and other efficiencies major budget areas, such as adult social care, should evolve over time towards more personalised services, with individual budget and control over services resting more firmly with people in need of assistance and their carers. These issues are equally relevant to adult social care within a Suffolk or an Ipswich framework. Only within a unitary Ipswich council can efficiency gains be maximised across the current commissioning responsibilities of two local authorities.

### ***What form of transitional arrangements would be required***

As this would be a substantial service for the new unitary Ipswich authority to run, it is inevitable that there would be transition costs associated with it. The key areas identified are:

- ◆ Putting in place a shadow management structure for adult and health and wellbeing services (including at director and portfolio-holder level) with strong adult social care leadership to set up the strategies and framework for commissioning, procurement and service delivery.
- ◆ Obtaining quality information on existing services and commitments for care provision at an area and an individual basis.
- ◆ Establishing appropriate information technology systems that relate not just to adult social care in Ipswich but also are integrated with the provision of other key services and in particular health and housing.

The extent to which the first two points above are challenging and, arguably costly, will largely depend on the level of co-operation that Suffolk County Council would give in the 18 months up to the commencement of the new unitary Ipswich council. Part of that relates to the quality of the information the county council has and/or will be prepared to make available. Ipswich Borough Council hopes that a positive relationship between the two authorities would minimise transitional costs. The techniques outlined on page 1 of this appendix will be used to drive up efficiency and reduce costs where possible.

### ***Conclusion***

Adult social care is an important service that the new unitary Ipswich council will take on. It is a major part of any unitary authority's budget and would involve significant transitional work and costs. However, while there are some risks associated with this area due to possible unforeseen costs and service need changes, the service area will not have additional costs in Ipswich in the medium term.

### **Service Area: Housing**

#### ***Summary of range of services addressed within the identified service area***

The range of services that need to be covered are:

- Housing benefits
- Housing services

In terms of the housing the council has considered:

- ◆ Housing benefits services and their links to other services.
- ◆ Housing strategy including enabling affordable housing.
- ◆ Individual assessments of housing need, maintaining the Housing Register and allocating social housing.
- ◆ Homelessness prevention and assessment meeting legislative duties including the provision of accommodation.
- ◆ General housing advice.

- ◆ Management of 8,500 council-owned homes.
- ◆ Improving private sector housing conditions and enforcing statutory housing standards.
- ◆ The provision of renovation and disabled facilities grants and funding and support to voluntary sector agencies.
- ◆ Management of a county council-owned travellers' site.

### ***Strategies and opportunities for improved service delivery***

The main opportunities related to this service area relate to the integration of all housing and adult social care statutory responsibilities within one authority. In particular the key areas where improvement should be achievable are:

- ◆ The creation of a single team to undertake individual's assessments of housing care and/or support needs for all user groups. Within this there is potential to develop a consistent set of eligibility criteria for access to services. This will result in better data that will enhance planning, commissioning and development of services.
- ◆ Increased level and speed of benefit take-up through a joined up approach to housing and welfare benefits and rights advice.
- ◆ Single out of hours call service that should reduce duplication and costs whilst providing a seamless single service for the user.
- ◆ The provision of neighbourhood-based services.

### ***Issues that would need to be resolved and initial proposals to resolve them***

The main issues that would need to be resolved relate to ensuring services and systems are properly integrated. This relates to three main issues:

- ◆ The creation of a one-stop shop approach to needs assessment. Ipswich Borough Council's recent management restructure decisions to group all housing services under a single head of service are likely to aid this.

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- ◆ Ensuring transference of data on client based and financial management systems is undertaken during the transitional phase of setting up the unitary Ipswich council.
- ◆ The provision and management of residential and respite care. This is an issue in terms of direct provision and procurement of services whether or not a new unitary Ipswich council is established.

The former two points would require some resolution of ICT issues particularly in the lead up to the commencement of a new unitary Ipswich council.

### ***Likely cost implications of a unitary authority***

The council is confident it can deliver the entire Housing Services area that will be required for a unitary Ipswich council at less cost than is currently spent on Housing Services in Ipswich combined with any reasonable Ipswich proportion of Suffolk Housing Services (particularly housing-related adult social care) expenditure.

In that regard, it should be noted that initial data would suggest that more than 25% of the county council's supporting people budget is spent on supported housing in Ipswich.

In terms of Housing Benefit, the council is in the last year of a three-year improvement plan. This includes a complete review of business processes and staffing resources. Ipswich Borough Council has invested in a new computer system, which is now showing benefits in terms of efficiency and simplicity. At the time of initiating the new council, Ipswich Borough Council will have a top performing Benefits Service.

### ***What form of transitional arrangements would be required***

Reviewing customer journeys in association with social care and health will be important to ensure streamlined systems. Work in this area would be under the leadership of the Director of Adult Social Care, Health & Wellbeing and the Portfolio-holder.

Work will be needed on ICT issues and ensuring appropriate planning is carried out to ensure proper continuity of services for the users of the supporting people services. For the vast majority of other services little or no transitional arrangements would be required since the services are currently the responsibility of Ipswich Borough Council.

### ***Conclusion***

A unitary Ipswich council will provide some opportunities for savings and/or service improvements through the techniques highlighted on page 1 of this appendix.

## **Service Area: Cultural and Related Services**

### ***Summary of range of services addressed within the identified service area***

In producing this section the council has considered the following services:

- ◆ Arts facilities and development
- ◆ Sports facilities and development
- ◆ Libraries
- ◆ Museums and heritage
- ◆ Festivals and attractions
- ◆ Parks and open spaces (including children's play)

Of this list, Ipswich Borough Council is effectively the lead authority in Ipswich for all services apart from libraries. Somewhat unusually, Ipswich Borough Council currently runs and finances all the extensive public sector museum services with very little county council support, although this is a regional facility.

### ***Strategies and opportunities for improved service delivery***

The following strategies have been identified:

- ◆ Libraries as part of neighbourhood services. Currently, Ipswich central library and the smaller libraries within residential areas of Ipswich are not integrated with other facilities or services. The council's intention will be to move towards a streamlined and integrated provision of services and in particular there are

opportunities to co-locate services at a neighbourhood level. This would be possible as Ipswich Borough Council already runs a number of sports centres, area offices and other functions from neighbourhood-based buildings.

◆ Currently, the provision of sports facilities and services is split between the borough council and the county council and in terms of the latter between schools provision and non-schools provision. An integrated service will have the opportunity for enhanced delivery and efficiency savings and better links to initiatives such as extended schools. A key issue that this should focus on addressing is the participation rates in sport in Ipswich which are recorded as being low.

◆ Currently there are two authorities providing support for arts and entertainments issues and the council believes an integrated service will provide the opportunity for enhanced delivery and efficiency savings. In particular, a single support system will provide greater flexibility and an enhanced ability to focus on specific priorities.

◆ Ipswich runs a number of major regional events each year, including the Ip-art arts festival.

◆ Ipswich has a significant number of parks and open spaces, which could be integrated more closely with children's services.

#### ***Issues that would need to be resolved and initial proposals to resolve them***

◆ Delivery of library services. It is likely that these will be delivered in partnership with Suffolk County Council, although alternative options both regionally and nationally are available, including linking up with the new University Campus Suffolk and Suffolk New College.

◆ Involvement in Suffolk sports partnerships. The council is currently involved in a range of sports related partnerships and it intends to remain involved in these partnerships.

◆ Grant-making and facilitating role. This is an area which will be increasingly important in the period up to the 2012 Olympics and Paralympics. It is suggested that some sports related monies and/or monies associated with efficiency savings be invested in this area, either within a dedicated sports grant and development section or within a wider corporate grants advice section.

◆ Commissioning services or direct delivery: There are a wide range of options in the cultural field in relation to the methods of service delivery. This is an issue whether or not a change to a new unitary Ipswich council takes place. However, the move to a unitary authority would provide a key opportunity to re-appraise the way such services are delivered.

#### ***Likely cost implications of a unitary authority***

The Council is confident that it could deliver the entire Cultural and Related Services area that will be required for a unitary Ipswich council at less cost than is currently spent on Cultural and Related Services in Ipswich combined with any reasonable Ipswich proportion of Suffolk Cultural and Related Services expenditure. The techniques outlined on page 1 of this appendix will be used to drive up efficiency and

reduce costs where possible. In addition, we will continue to look for opportunities to generate income.

### ***What form of transitional arrangements would be required***

It is not thought that there will need to be major transitional arrangements for this Service Area with the exception of libraries. Preparatory work will need to be undertaken in relation to options for a joint libraries service but it is not thought that these will be major or costly.

### ***Conclusion***

A unitary Ipswich council will provide some opportunities for savings and/or service improvements through the techniques highlighted on page 1 of this appendix. However this is not a service area that will face major changes solely as a result of the change to a unitary authority.

## **Service Area: Environmental Services**

### ***Summary of range of services addressed within the identified service area***

The range of services that need to be covered are:

- ◆ Street cleaning and waste
- ◆ Air quality
- ◆ Environmental Health
- ◆ Other

In terms of “other”, the council has considered trading standards, licensing and bereavement services.

The borough council already provides most of the components of this service area with the main area of county council responsibility being waste disposal and trading standards.

### ***Strategies and opportunities for improved service delivery***

The new Ipswich unitary authority would focus on the following two areas:

- ◆ The integration of trading standards with environmental health. It is proposed to directly provide the components of trading standard services that are central to an urban area – such as fair trading matters – but to buy in specialist services, such as metrology, from elsewhere.
- ◆ Ipswich Borough Council has recently designated three Air Quality Management Areas. All problems associated with all three are basically caused by transport emissions. A unitary Ipswich council will ensure that the one authority is responsible for the air quality and transport matters rather than the current situation where responsibility is split between two authorities.
- ◆ Street cleansing services will be part of integrated neighbourhood working.

### ***Issues that would need to be resolved and initial proposals to resolve them***

The following two issues have been identified:

- ◆ In terms of trading standards the main issues that would need to be resolved would be exactly what elements of the service to undertake directly and which elements to procure from elsewhere. The borough council's environmental services IT package has a trading standards component.
- ◆ It will be essential to ensure that waste disposal systems and procedures are in place. The county council is currently procuring waste disposal services and a unitary Ipswich council is likely to continue to work within this partnership and would be minded to continue to be part of any initiatives to join-up waste services.

### ***Likely cost implications of a unitary authority***

There will be some minor costs associated with the setting up of a new trading standards team within the new unitary Ipswich authority but the council is confident that it can deliver the entire Environmental Services required for a unitary Ipswich council at a comparable cost than is currently spent on Environmental Services in Ipswich combined with any reasonable Ipswich proportion of Suffolk planning and development expenditure. The techniques outlined on page 1 of this appendix will be used to drive up efficiency and reduce costs where possible.

It is assumed for the purposes of this Business Case that the implications for a new unitary Ipswich authority of the Landfill Allowance Trading Scheme (LATS) are cost neutral. However, over time, it is likely that LATS related costs will rise for all authorities responsible for waste disposal but there is no reason to believe that the Ipswich rise is likely to be proportionately higher than the rest of Suffolk rise.

### ***What form of transitional arrangements would be required***

It is not thought that there will need to be major transitional arrangements for this service area. Ipswich Borough Council's existing constitutional structures and delegations could be easily amended to take into account the extra functions (principally related to trading standards matters).

Some planning and agreements would be needed on waste disposal matters but the council is not proposing any radical changes to the existing ways of undertaking this component of the service.

### ***Conclusion***

A unitary Ipswich council will provide some opportunities for savings and/or service improvements through the techniques highlighted on page 1 of this appendix. However, this is not a service area that will face major changes solely as a result of the change to a unitary authority.

## **Service Area: Planning and Development**

### ***Summary of range of services addressed within the identified service area***

The range of services that need to be covered are:

- ◆ Preparation of the Local Development Framework
- ◆ In relation to the Regional Strategy
- ◆ Waste and Mineral Planning

As a result, issues associated with other elements such as development control and building control functions are not included within this section. However, the Borough Council believes that those two functions could be run without any additional resources within a unitary Ipswich authority.

### ***Strategies and opportunities for improved service delivery***

The council believes there are opportunities for enhanced service delivery for Planning and Development issues from a unitary Ipswich authority. These relate to:

- ◆ Having a fully integrated Local Development Framework covering all planning issues – including minerals and waste planning.
- ◆ Having a more active role at regional level due to the enhanced status top tier authorities have legally as well as the enhanced role top tier authorities have within regional working practices (i.e. they have a seat on all relevant working / technical groups).
- ◆ There would be real benefits in a Planning and Development service being part of an authority that also includes transport, economic development, housing, education and other aspects of local authority functions relevant to the development and growth agenda.

### ***Issues that would need to be resolved and initial proposals to resolve them***

The following issues have been identified as needing resolving:

- Ensuring appropriate waste and minerals expertise. It is anticipated that the Suffolk Waste and Minerals Local Development Framework would be completed before a unitary Ipswich authority went live. Irrespective of this, due to the urban nature of the authority, there is not a high likelihood of significant minerals and waste planning workloads in the town. Recent history bears out this assertion.
- Ensuring the council has access to appropriate research capability to provide the Local Development Framework evidence base. Producing an appropriate evidence base is an important part of the Local Development Framework structure. Currently, the obligation to do this is split between upper-tier and lower-tier authorities. It is considered that Ipswich Borough Council will need a small research and information team to address this area. It might be appropriate for such a team to be part of a central unit rather than as part of any Planning and Development Service.

### ***Likely cost implications of a unitary authority***

The council is confident that it can deliver the entire Planning and Development service that would be required for a unitary Ipswich council at less cost than is currently spent on Planning and Development in Ipswich combined with any reasonable Ipswich proportion of Suffolk Planning and Development expenditure. The techniques outlined on page 1 of this appendix will be used to drive up efficiency and reduce costs where possible.

### ***What form of transitional arrangements would be required***

It is not thought that there will need to be major transitional arrangements for this service area. Ipswich Borough Council's existing constitutional structures and delegations could be easily amended to take into account the extra functions (principally related to minerals and waste matters).

### ***Conclusion***

A unitary authority will provide some opportunities for savings and/or service improvements through the techniques highlighted on page 1 of this appendix. However, this is not a service area that will face major changes solely as a result of the change to a unitary authority.

The opportunities arise out of the integration of services within a single authority, the enhanced strategic decision-making that that would allow and the louder voice a unitary authority will have on the regional and national stage.

## **Service Area: Fire Services**

### ***Summary of range of services addressed within the identified Service Area***

This section looks at the issue of fire services for a unitary Ipswich council. Suffolk County Council, via the Suffolk Fire and Rescue service, currently provides the fire service for Ipswich.

### ***Strategies and opportunities for improved service delivery***

It is likely that a joint Fire and Rescue authority would be established. For Ipswich, this would provide the following opportunities:

- ◆ Direct representation on the fire authority.
- ◆ Opportunities for enhanced working relationships with relevant existing Ipswich Borough Council functions such as building control, community safety and private sector housing.

### ***Issues that would need to be resolved and initial proposals to resolve them***

The main two issues that would need to be resolved are:

- ◆ The setting up of the new fire authority. This would provide more democratic control and would reflect the interests of the fire service which would have its own 'fire authority' and not be marginalised as part of a single councillors' portfolio. There are plenty of examples where unitary authorities are part of a joint fire service with a relevant county council and it is suggested that lessons are learnt

and, as appropriate best practice structures and procedures followed, to establish the new fire authority.

◆ The distribution of costs between a unitary Ipswich council and Suffolk County Council. Again, the same principle applies that there are plenty of examples where unitary authorities are part of a joint fire service with a relevant county council.

### ***Likely cost implications of a unitary authority***

Since both the county council and the new unitary Ipswich Council will be precepted based on Council Tax base for the new fire service/authority it is assumed that this will be cost neutral.

### ***What form of transitional arrangements would be required***

It is likely that there will be some minor transitional costs associated with setting up the new fire authority but operationally the existing service will continue right up to the time of the start of the new unitary Ipswich council and then the new fire authority will take over.

### ***Conclusion***

Suffolk County Council currently runs this service area and with the proposal to create new joint Fire Authority the financial and operational impacts are likely to be negligible/neutral.

## **Service Area: Economic Development**

### ***Summary of range of services addressed within the identified service area***

The areas examined within this Economic Development Section include:

- ◆ Core Economic Development functions
- ◆ Tourism initiatives and support
- ◆ Related partnership initiative support

### ***Strategies and opportunities for improved service delivery***

Virtually all of the economic development and tourism work undertaken by local authorities in Ipswich is undertaken by Ipswich Borough Council. Currently, the County Council's involvement in economic development functions in Ipswich is very limited and its economic development focus centres on the rest of the county.

Largely as a result of this position, the borough council believes there are opportunities for enhanced service delivery on economic development issues from a new unitary Ipswich council. These relate to:

- ◆ The potential for improved community economic development support which could link in to enhanced neighbourhood structures and engagement proposed.
- ◆ The potential for a local area agreement that actually focuses on economic development issues in Ipswich rather than focuses on non-Ipswich issues.
- ◆ There would be real benefits in an Economic Development service being part of

an authority that also includes planning, transport, housing, education and other aspects of local authority functions relevant to the development and growth agenda.

◆ Ipswich could play a far more significant role in the marketing of tourism as a unitary council.

### ***Issues that would need to be resolved and initial proposals to resolve them***

Three issues would need to be resolved:

- Establishing an appropriate community economic development support structure. It would be intended to produce a strategy to do this alongside existing Investing in Communities programmes and to implement this strategy when a unitary Ipswich authority commences operations;
- Ensuring appropriate cross-boundary local partnerships continue to prosper. Ipswich has historically been at the forefront of work developing and sustaining initiative such as the Haven Gateway Partnership, Regional Cities East, the Cambridge to Ipswich Hi-tech Corridor, IP-City and the Suffolk Development Agency. The new unitary Ipswich council will remain fully committed to these partnerships and others that support economic development and growth over the wider Ipswich area;
- Getting the relevant Local Area Agreement theme in place. This will need to be done with partners on the Local Strategic Partnership and the intention will be to have this in place on or around the start date of the new unitary Ipswich council.

### ***Likely cost implications of a unitary authority***

The council is confident that it can deliver the entire Economic Development service that would be required for a new unitary Ipswich council at less cost than is currently spent on Economic Development in Ipswich combined with any reasonable Ipswich proportion of Suffolk economic development expenditure. The techniques outlined on page 1 of this appendix will be used to drive up efficiency and reduce costs where possible.

### ***What form of transitional arrangements would be required***

It is not thought that there will need to be major transitional arrangements for this service area.

There will be no need for any additional staff to be in place in advance of the unitary authority going live, although some involvement will be needed from existing council staff in transitional working as part of the development of the new Local Area Agreement.

### ***Conclusion***

A unitary authority will provide some opportunities for savings and/or service improvements through the techniques highlighted on page 1 of this appendix. However, this is not a service area that will face major changes solely as a result of the change to a unitary authority.

The opportunities arise out of the integration of services within a single authority, the

enhanced strategic decision-making that that would allow and the clarity it would bring for businesses and those working in and with deprived communities.

## **Service Area: Corporate Support Services**

### ***Summary of range of services addressed within the identified Service Area***

This section has considered the following five service components:

- ◆ ICT
- ◆ Human resources
- ◆ Finance
- ◆ Legal
- ◆ Policy and performance

All five of these are currently carried out by both districts and Suffolk County Council.

### ***Strategies and opportunities for improved service delivery***

The following two strategies are considered important:

- ◆ A larger council covering a wider remit of services will need to carefully consider its human resources strategies and policies in terms of both short-term integration issues as well as longer-term issues. Unified conditions and policies for all local authority workers in Ipswich would be important if a “one” organisation culture is to be created.
- ◆ Ipswich Borough Council has recently gone live on a extensive new financial system which is designed for unitary councils. This is the Agresso system.
- ◆ The council has a new HR system which is also designed for unitary councils.
- ◆ The ICT needs will become more extensive and varied in terms of hardware and software requirements. There are many opportunities associated with integrated management and data systems but also a number of challenges associated with scaling up and transference and compatibility of existing data systems.

### ***Issues that would need to be resolved and initial proposals to resolve them***

Three key issues will need to be resolved:

- ◆ Integration of ICT systems. The new unitary Ipswich council will need to establish clear corporate standards and procurement procedures while ensuring that changes are managed to set financial and ICT capability levels.
- ◆ A new staffing structure will be required and there will need to be work in this area related, in part, to pay and conditions. It is considered that there is considerable expertise within both existing authorities and opportunities to learn from other unitary authorities.

◆ In simple terms, other elements of corporate support services are influenced by the scale and remit of the organisation. The council recognises that it will be important to extend these services but is keen to ensure that this is done to a level that reflects long-term requirements - rather than to a higher level that might be needed only for the short-term issues associated with either side of the commencement of the new unitary Ipswich council.

### ***Likely cost implications of a unitary authority***

The council is confident that it can deliver the Central Support Services that will be required for a new unitary Ipswich council at less cost than is currently spent on Central Support Services in Ipswich combined with any reasonable Ipswich proportion of Suffolk Central Support Services expenditure. The techniques outlined on page 1 of this appendix will be used to drive up efficiency and reduce costs.

### ***What form of transitional arrangements would be required***

It will be necessary to ensure that appropriate ICT issues are addressed to enable a new unitary Ipswich council to commence on the relevant date. There will be cost implications associated with this and these will be allowed for within the financial work to be commissioned.

There will be a need for HR specialists as part of the transition team to undertake development of relevant policies and systems and ensure smooth employee transfer and recruitment etc.

### ***Conclusion***

With the exception of ICT, this is not a service area that will face major changes within a unitary Ipswich authority apart from an up-scaling in the service in relation to the increased size of a unitary council from the existing borough council.

However, the issues associated with ICT and HR are important, particularly during the transitional stage.

A unitary authority will provide significant opportunities for savings and/or service improvements through the techniques highlighted on page 1 of this appendix.

## **Service Area: Central Services**

### ***Summary of range of services addressed within the identified service area***

The range of services that need to be covered as:

- ◆ Local Tax Collection
- ◆ Electoral Registration Services

Other central service issues, such as sundry debtors, will need to be considered as part of work towards a unitary Ipswich council but these are not considered here.

### ***Strategies and opportunities for improved service delivery***

The opportunities for improvement in local tax collection and electoral registration are limited. Ipswich Borough Council currently undertakes both services for the borough and the county councils (in relation to Ipswich). In considering each:

- ◆ Local tax collection issues will be simpler by virtue of the fact money will only be collected for one authority and explanatory information for the public will be easier to set out and understand.
- ◆ Opportunities for improvement on electoral services issues are limited since the service is already entirely provided for by Ipswich Borough Council which also runs the county council elections in Ipswich.

### ***Issues that would need to be resolved and initial proposals to resolve them***

In terms of local tax collection and electoral registration services there are no significant issues that will need to be resolved.

### ***Likely cost implications of a unitary authority***

The council is confident that it can deliver the specified Central Services that will be required for a new unitary Ipswich council at the same or slightly less cost than is currently spent on them. The techniques outlined on page 1 of this appendix will be used to drive up efficiency and reduce costs.

There are opportunities for greater levels of savings in relation to electoral registration matters with the move to four-year elections.

### ***What form of transitional arrangements would be required***

None.

### ***Conclusion***

Ipswich Borough Council already runs this service area and therefore this specific area will not be a significant area of focus or change within any move to a unitary Ipswich authority. A unitary Ipswich council will provide some opportunities for savings and/or service improvements through the techniques highlighted on page 1 of this appendix. However, this is not a service area that will face major changes solely as a result of the change to a unitary authority.

## **Service Area: Other Costs**

### ***Summary of range of services addressed within the identified Service Area***

The range of services that need to be covered as:

- ◆ Pensions
- ◆ Trading Accounts

In terms of trading accounts, the only one of any significance that has a direct bearing on Ipswich is that of Ipswich Buses which is wholly owned by Ipswich Borough Council.

### ***Strategies and opportunities for improved service delivery***

There are no identified areas for service improvements since the intention would be to remain part of the Suffolk Pension Fund and to continue to hold Ipswich Buses as a separate trading account.

### ***Issues that would need to be resolved and initial proposals to resolve them***

The only aspect that will need addressing will be any revisions that will be required to the Pension Fund arrangements due to the changing nature of the new unitary Ipswich council together with the consequential changes to Suffolk County Council.

### ***Likely cost implications of a unitary authority***

It is assumed that this area would be cost-neutral. However, detailed pension related work would be required in relation to specific people transferred from Suffolk County Council to the new unitary Ipswich council.

### ***What form of transitional arrangements would be required***

Very limited transition arrangements, with low associated costs, are anticipated. In any event, calculations in terms of pensions would not realistically be able to take place until employee transference arrangements are finalised.

### ***Conclusion***

It is not anticipated that these particular services will be of significance in terms of a change to a unitary Ipswich council.