From: Scott Crudgington

To: <u>Stephen Giles-Medhurst; Owen Mapley</u>

Cc: Quentin Baker; Edward Knowles; Grace Kent; Rebecca Davey; Alex Coningsby

Subject: RE: County unitary: formal request fir papers that have been prepared

Date: 24 July 2020 15:08:00

Attachments: Hertfordshire discussion document v1.1.pdf

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Hi Stephen,

Hopefully I can answer your questions on Owen's behalf:

Q : As Terry Hone mentioned about actual saving figure on waste collection where did that come from ?

A: Cllr Hone has been using this figure long before I arrived at HCC, the figure originates from the various studies that have been undertaken by the Herts Waste Partnership on developing an integrated waste collection and disposal model seen in other parts of the country. This saving will obviously be relevant to a move to a Unitary model, but did not originate through the recent PwC work.

Q: On what date was the request made to PWC?

A: The Director of Resources commissioned PwC in November 2019.

Q: On what date was the request made to the Director of Resources to commission this work and by whom?

A: The Director of Resources was asked to commission PwC on the 12 November 2019 by the Chief Executive.

Q : One would assume PWC would have been sent a scoping document . I would like sight of that and the thus the terms of reference.

A: Attached.

Q: When was the document now circulated received back from PWC?

A: The document underwent a significant level of challenge, review and quality assurance as both HCC and PwC wanted to ensure all comments and figures could be evidenced. The report was concluded and signed off in February 2020. For reasons that are obvious, the time was then not right to make the report public.

Q : This was funded from the general consultancy budget . Was this reported to any members or Audit Committee?

A: The commitment and then the spend was included in the detailed budget monitoring reports that support the quarterly monitoring process for officers and Members. The Leader and Resources Portfolio Holder were aware of the cost.

Q: What other items have been commissioned from this budget and when?

A: PwC have been commissioned for a further piece of work to support HCC undertake the engagement stage around Local Government Reform in Hertfordshire. This involves the production of a further document to support the engagement, support as appropriate in undertaking the engagement, and help develop a proposal for Government if consensus is reached on a way forward. The cost of this commission is £40,000, with an option for further support depending on the level of engagement support required.

Regards,



From: Stephen Giles-Medhurst <S.Giles-Medhurst@hertfordshire.gov.uk>

Sent: 24 July 2020 09:56

To: Owen Mapley < Owen. Mapley@hertfordshire.gov.uk >

Cc: Quentin Baker < Quentin.Baker@hertfordshire.gov.uk>; Scott Crudgington

<Scott.Crudgington@hertfordshire.gov.uk>

Subject: RE: County unitary: formal request fir papers that have been prepared

Owen

The answer to the last point is yes.

As Terry Hone mentioned about actual saving figure on waste collection where did that come from ?

As the following questions arise?

On what date was the request made to PWC?

On what date was the request made to the Director of Resources to commission this work and by whom?

One would assume PWC would have been sent a scoping document . I would like sight of that and the thus the terms of reference.

When was the document now circulated received back from PWC?

This was funded from the general consultancy budget . Was this reported to any members or Audit Committee?

What other items have been commissioned from this budget and when?

All for now

Regards

Stephen

Sent with BlackBerry Work (www.blackberry.com)

Date: Thursday, 23 Jul 2020, 18:00

<<u>xxxxx.xxxxxxxxx@xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx</u>>

Subject: RE: County unitary: formal request fir papers that have been prepared

Stephen,

I have been tied up in an HR hearing today so have not had a chance to get to emails until now.

There has not been separate work done by officers on this previously although as you would expect there was some officer engagement with PWC as this report was prepared.

Following this initial report, we have recently been working with PWC on how to follow up the initial report. The statement David released yesterday calls for engagement on the subject of potential LGR, and so we are now doing some work with PWC to develop materials on the best way to do that engagement in Herts. That is work in progress, but given the need to engage with all stakeholders, that will need to be completed soon and so it will then be shared.

Scott can provide details of the commercials on that follow up work if you would like to see it.

Owen

Owen Mapley
Chief Executive
Hertfordshire County Council
County Hall, Pegs Lane, Hertford, SG13 8DE, Postal Point: CHO238



Sent: 22 July 2020 16:58

<<u>xxxxxxxxx@xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx</u>>

Subject: RE: County unitary: formal request fir papers that have been prepared

Owen

Thanks - I just need to confirm was there any separate work done by county officers since or before this report on this issue ?

Thanks

Stephen

Sent with BlackBerry Work (www.blackberry.com)

Date: Wednesday, 22 Jul 2020, 16:45

Subject: Re: County unitary: formal request fir papers that have been prepared

Stephen - very latest update. David has decided to write to all stakeholders including a link to the PWC report, so you will receive this information this afternoon.

As you will see, it is a detailed report so I am confident it will provide the information you have been seeking.

Finally, as promised earlier, Scott will also be emailing you with info about the PWC work done.

OWen

Owen Mapley
Chief Executive
Hertfordshire County Council
County Hall, Pegs Lane, Hertford, SG13 8DE

Tel: (Internal: 25200)

SENT FROM MOBILE DEVICE

Sent: Wednesday, July 22, 2020 2:12:20 PM

<<u>xxxxxxx.xxxx@xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx</u>>

Subject: RE: County unitary: formal request fir papers that have been prepared

Owen

Thank you.

Can you also confirm as per questions to Ralph will be answered as to how much PWC has cost and when the work was commissioned?

Regards

Stephen

Sent with BlackBerry Work (www.blackberry.com)

Date: Wednesday, 22 Jul 2020, 13:58

Subject: RE: County unitary: formal request fir papers that have been prepared

Stephen – just wanted to confirm that I will be emailing you detailed information – should be later this afternoon.

Am juggling a number of meetings and issues but if not this afternoon will be tomorrow morning at the latest.

Owen



Owen Mapley Chief Executive Hertfordshire County Council

County Hall, Pegs Lane, Hertford, SG13 8DE, Postal Point: CHO238



Sent: 21 July 2020 20:38

Subject: RE: County unitary: formal request fir papers that have been prepared

Owen

Thanks.

I hold my other email (I think you know what that will be) till I hear from you tomorrow.

Regards

Stephen

Sent with BlackBerry Work (www.blackberry.com)

Date: Tuesday, 21 Jul 2020, 20:28

<<u>xxxxxxxxx@xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx</u>>

Subject: Re: County unitary: formal request fir papers that have been prepared

Stephen

Just a quick note to confirm that I have now spoken to Quentin. I need to have one more conversation with David and I will then be in a position to reply more substantively – which I will do tomorrow.

Owen

Date: Tuesday, 21 July 2020 at 15:44

Subject: RE: County unitary: formal request fir papers that have been prepared

Stephen – just acknowledging receipt of your emails from this afternoon and I note your exchanges with Quentin below.

Given the duration of today's meeting, Quentin and I have not had the chance to discuss yet today and I will need to seek his advice to aid consideration of your requests, including in the light of comments made at today's meeting.

I will reply as rapidly as possible once we have been able to consider today's developments.

Owen



Owen Mapley Chief Executive Hertfordshire County Council

County Hall, Pegs Lane, Hertford, SG13 8DE, Postal Point: CHO238

T: (Internal: 25200) E: owen.mapley@hertfordshire.gov.uk

From: Stephen Giles-Medhurst < S.Giles-Medhurst@hertfordshire.gov.uk >

Sent: 21 July 2020 15:33

To: Quentin Baker < Quentin.Baker@hertfordshire.gov.uk > **Cc:** Owen Mapley < <u>Owen.Mapley@hertfordshire.gov.uk</u> >

Subject: RE: County unitary: formal request fir papers that have been prepared

Quentin

A figure from that report regarding one area of savings with no details how its arrived at has now been mentioned in council by the administration yet the opposition is denied access .

This is just not acceptable.

My side will have no option but to use FOI and question refusal to provide information if that remains the case .

Regards

Stephen

Sent with BlackBerry Work (www.blackberry.com)

From: Quentin Baker < Quentin.Baker@hertfordshire.gov.uk >

Date: Tuesday, 21 Jul 2020, 15:24

To: Stephen Giles-Medhurst < S.Giles-Medhurst@hertfordshire.gov.uk >

Subject: RE: County unitary: formal request fir papers that have been prepared

Stephen,

An admission of the existence of a report doesn't, of itself constitute a disclosure of its content nor would it waive its confidentiality. If justified due to the nature of the information, it might

continue to be confidential and released to elected members on that basis. Alternatively, it may be released without restriction.

QB

Sent: 21 July 2020 15:17

Quentin

Thank you for that.

However given both the leader and now the Ex member for resources admit in public there has been such work has been undertaken and I have now been promised written answers the confidential nature of this no longer applies.

Do you agree

Regards Stephen

Sent with BlackBerry Work (www.blackberry.com)

Date: Tuesday, 21 Jul 2020, 15:09

Subject: RE: County unitary: formal request fir papers that have been prepared

Stephen,

I'm not aware of the process by which a report produced by PWC was commissioned but I would note that Executive Directors have delegated authority to make expenditure and commission advice.

As for confidentiality it isn't uncommon for work to be undertaken for groups, both administration and opposition on a confidential basis. For example when developing the budget proposals, both administration and opposition receive dedicated support in respect of developing plans/proposals. This will be confidential and indeed the confidentiality is enshrined in the constitution.

The FoI legislation also recognises this as it contains an exemption specifically for the circumstances of policy development and also where information is due to be released in the

near future.

Kind regards Quentin

Sent: 21 July 2020 13:53

Subject: FW: County unitary: formal request fir papers that have been prepared

Quentin

See below - I now understand that a report was commissioned from Price Waterhouse re the potential local government reform in Hertfordshire.

If this is the case given that there has no decision to fund this expense as I can see from Cabinet . If there was can you please point to the minute confirming this .

If this work was commissioned by the council then this information should be made available to all members .

If this information and commissioned work was requested by the leader and then shared only with the Conservative group I wonder if this is defaco 'ultra vies'?

I would welcome your advice.

Regards

Stephen

Sent with BlackBerry Work (www.blackberry.com)

Date: Friday, 17 Jul 2020, 11:08

Subject: RE: County unitary: formal request fir papers that have been prepared

Owen

I have not heard back from you and now I see that this issue has gone public with and the administrations wish and is in today's media .

Given this there can no longer be any reason to deny my group access to all the emails and

documents provided to David on this matter.

Please confirm this will now be done . My other option is a formal FOI request and if I cannot have confirmation by Monday of that I and thus my group will receive all these documents I will submit a formal request .

Whilst I understand that officers have been busy they were clearly instructed to work on this during COVID and I see no reason for any further delays in keeping this information which is clearly no longer confidential from opposition councillors.

Once I have ALL the papers I will must likely request a formal briefing but that will be after Tuesday .

Regards

Stephen

County councillor Stephen Giles-Medhurst

Leader of the opposition

Sent with BlackBerry Work (www.blackberry.com)

Date: Wednesday, 15 Jul 2020, 12:43

Subject: RE: County unitary: formal request fir papers that have been prepared

Yes

However I would expect that there were background papers prepared by county officers to back these up so I would as already requested sight of those.

Please confirm I will receive those .

Thanks

Stephen

Regards

Sent with BlackBerry Work (www.blackberry.com)

Date: Wednesday, 15 Jul 2020, 12:29

Subject: RE: County unitary: formal request fir papers that have been prepared

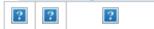
Thanks Stephen. I understand from David that he has now shared with you and Judi the materials that he used with District Leaders.

Owen



Owen Mapley Chief Executive Hertfordshire County Council

County Hall, Pegs Lane, Hertford, SG13 8DE, Postal Point: CHO238



Sent: 14 July 2020 13:24

Subject: RE: County unitary: formal request fir papers that have been prepared

Owen

I now understand that is information has been more widely shared at the Leaders meeting that has just finished.

My group will still require a briefing but in light of that I formally request sight of the papers prepared for David (and thus the Conservative Group) before any such briefing .

Regards

Stephen

Sent with BlackBerry Work (www.blackberry.com)

Date: Tuesday, 14 Jul 2020, 10:32

Subject: RE: County unitary

Stephen,

The information that I understand you are referring to below is a set of slides that officers did not prepare, that were used by David for informal discussions with conservative councillors. Some initial work, including potential estimates of savings had been prepared by officers to assist David's considerations. That early work is part of the normal process of potential policy formulation and as such is not something appropriate for me to share more widely.

If it appears there is an imminent prospect of this changing from potential policy consideration to something more formal, I will share relevant information with you on an embargoed basis. Scott and I would also be very happy discussing this policy area with you and your colleagues in our regular briefings. Let me know if you would like to discuss further ahead of the next session.

Owen



Owen Mapley Chief Executive Hertfordshire County Council

County Hall, Pegs Lane, Hertford, SG13 8DE, Postal Point: CHO238

Sent: 13 July 2020 19:24

Subject: RE: County unitary

Owen

Thank you for that but I understand that from a well informed source that this information has been shared with other councillors outside of the conservative group.

I understand that a presentation has been made to a wider group of Conservative cllrs in the districts indicating a saving of £140 m for a single unitary and £105 m for two.

Given this must mean that a substantial piece of work has been done on this I formally ask for sight of this.

Grateful if you will confirm I will now receive this.

Regards

Stephen

Sent with BlackBerry Work (www.blackberry.com)

Date: Monday, 13 Jul 2020, 08:49

Subject: RE: County unitary

Morning Stephen. Officers are doing some work following David's request to look at this, as he set out in GLs meeting. As soon as this is ready, I will share it with you.

As discussed, David is speaking to DC leaders tomorrow. I would anticipate that he has probably discussed it with his group, but nothing has been shared publicly yet – mainly as this is initial discussions with leaders.

Owen



Owen Mapley Chief Executive Hertfordshire County Council

County Hall, Pegs Lane, Hertford, SG13 8DE, Postal Point: CHO238

Sent: 10 July 2020 22:36

Subject: County unitary

Owen

I understand that officers are preparing a county wide unitary background report or submission.

If this is the case can I have sight of this please?

Thanks

Stephen

Sent with BlackBerry Work (www.blackberry.com)