

Service Specification

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1 BACKGROUND AND OVERVIEW SUMMARY

1.1 INTRODUCTION

This specification aims to provide clarity to all those involved, identify common areas of interest and priority in the respective Councils. It will act as the strategy for the new service, outlining the vision and key objectives rather than the 'service plan' which will detail how the objectives will be delivered.

1.2 VISION

'To maintain and improve the health, safety and welfare of the citizens and visitors of West Berkshire and Wokingham'.

1.3 BUSINESS CASE FOR A JOINT SERVICE

- Provide a joint Environmental Health & Licensing Service for West Berkshire Council and Wokingham Borough Council.
- Reduce the overall service cost by 15% of Operational Budget per partner.
- Identify Best Practice to enhance service provision.
- Reduce accommodation demands.
- Maintain recruitment and retention success.
- Enhance flexible working initiatives.
- Improved Service resilience.

2 FUNCTIONS OF THE SERVICE

2.1 CURRENT SERVICE DELIVERY

One of the distinct advantages of the venture is the common areas of work undertaken by both authorities. EHL functions can often be delivered in diverse ways and whilst there are variations, both structures align reasonably well and can be compared with some accuracy.

Both partners operate a service which deals in inspection, investigation and advice to people and business. These services are predominately directly linked to legislative requirements which define how officers should approach any given subject, combined with effective ISO (International Organisation for Standardization) based systems. It is also incumbent on the authorities to act in a preventative or pro-active fashion where possible to reduce future workloads. This may vary from ensuring effective communication on matters of health promotion and education to informing businesses of their health and safety responsibilities in the work place.

All work is heavily influenced by 'risk management' and it is important to have effective intelligence on the needs of the population to ensure resources are directed to those most in need. It should be made clear to all those involved that this approach will carry on across both areas and that by merging the two services all risks will be addressed in an equal and transparent way accurately reflected through the new structure.

2.2 FUNCTIONS TO BE DELIVERED

The service will operate across the full range of relevant functions as specified in Schedule 1 of the Agreement. The following sub-sections provide a further explanation as to the nature and extent of the service in delivering these.

2.2.1 AIR QUALITY MANAGEMENT

As required through the Environment Act 1995 and other associated Regulations the service will carry out the following:

- Routine monitoring of air quality standards.
- Seek to gather enhanced levels of information at high risk sites.
- Shared information on websites.
- Conduct public consultation for any action plans developed.
- Undertake research and produce reports based on the requirement of the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs.

2.2.2 AUTHORISED INDUSTRIAL PROCESSES

As set out in the Pollution Prevention and Control Act 1999 and associated Regulations the service will carry out the following:

- Issue permits and monitor compliance of those relevant activities, for example but not exclusively;
 - Cremation of human remains
 - Road stone Coating
 - Unloading of Petroleum Spirit
 - Solvent Degreasing Process
 - Vapour Recovery
 - Concrete Batching
 - Concrete Crushing
 - Dry Cleaning
 - Re-spraying of road vehicles

2.2.3 CONTAMINATED LAND

Under the framework of the Environmental Protection Act 1990 Part 2A and associated Acts and Regulations the service will carry out the following;

- Risk based monitoring of development via the planning process.
- Maintain a register and GIS mapped information.
- Seek external funding for remediation projects.

2.2.4 COMMUNICABLE DISEASES

Specific to those provisions under the Public Health (Control of Diseases) Act 1984 the service will undertake;

- Monitoring of prioritised infective agents.
- Routine liaison with external partners.
- Targeted sampling, where appropriate, where preventative benefits are highlighted.
- Policy on the approach towards this function will be linked to the wider Thames Valley regional incident management process.

2.2.5 ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION

This incorporates a wide range of topics traditionally referred to as 'Nuisance' such as domestic and commercial noise, air quality, water pollution and light pollution. By virtue of the Environmental Protection Act 1990, the Noise Act 1996 and the Clean Neighbourhoods and Environment Act 2005 the service will provide;

- Reactive and risk based complaint response.
- Targeted proactive work undertaken in cases judged to have specific need.

2.2.6 FOOD SAFETY

As the 'Food Authority' for all matters other than Food Standards (delivered through Trading Standards) – commonly understood through the requirements of EC Regulations 852 and 853, the service will;

- Deliver an inspection programme based on Food Standards Agency risk profiles.
- Sampling based on regional and local needs.
- Education and promotion based on health impact.
- Reactive work covering all areas of food safety and hygiene.

2.2.7 GAMBLING

Under the provisions of the Gambling Act 2005 the joint service will;

- Process and administer all licence applications for relevant facilities and premises as defined by the Act.
- Carry out appropriate risk based compliance monitoring of licences issued.
- Reactive complaint work dealing with any gambling related matters.
- Facilitate the delivery of a Gambling Policy and advise elected members accordingly.

2.2.8 HEALTH AND SAFETY AT WORK

As the defined 'Enforcing Authority' under the Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974 and associated Regulations the service will;

- Deliver an inspection programme based on Health and Safety Executive risk profiles.
- Accident investigation based on local needs.
- Education and promotion based on health impact.
- Reactive work covering all areas of health, safety and welfare.

2.2.9 LICENSING (LICENSING ACT 2003)

Under the general duties of 'Licensing Authorities' the service will;

- Process and administer all licence applications for relevant people and places as defined by the Act.
- Promote the Licensing Objectives as defined by the Act.
- Carry out an appropriate risk based inspection programme.
- Liaise with Thames Valley Police (TVP) on alcohol and neighbourhood policy.
- Carry out reactive work based on risk.
- Facilitate the delivery of a Licensing Policy and advise elected Members accordingly.

2.2.10 LICENSING – MISCELLANEOUS

The general duties of the 'Licensing Authority' for licences and registrations, including animal welfare, caravans, street collections, street traders and dermal treatments will be delivered by the service. We will;

- Process and administer all licence and registration applications as required under for example but not exclusively (Breeding of Dogs Act, Caravan Sites and Control of Development Act, Dangerous Wild Animals Act, House to House Collections Act, Pet Animals Act, Riding Establishments Act, Zoo Licensing Act)
- Carry out appropriate risk based compliance monitoring and/or pre-registration site checks.
- Carry out reactive work based on risk.

2.2.11 PRIVATE SECTOR HOUSING

Implementing the main provisions within the Housing Act 2004 (and some elements of the Housing Act 1985) the service will;

- Process and administer all licence applications for Houses in Multiple Occupation.
- Monitor the Private Sector Housing Stock and apply, where appropriate, the Housing Health and Safety Rating System.
- Carry out a risk based inspection programme for licensed properties.
- Work in partnership with colleagues delivering other elements of Housing function.
- Carry out reactive work based on risk.

2.2.12 PUBLIC HEALTH

Implementing the general provisions of the Public Health Acts 1936 and 1961 in relation to sewerage, drainage, sanitary conveniences, cesspools, water supplies, rubbish, filthy and verminous premises/people. This includes;

- Carry out reactive work based on risk.

2.2.13 TAXI LICENSING

This generally covers the public transport administration and regulation of Hackney Carriages and Private Hire Vehicles. Primarily the service will discharge functions of The Town Police Clauses Act 1847 and the Local Government Miscellaneous Provisions Act 1976. This includes;

- Processing and administration of all licence applications.
- Routine inspection of all vehicles.
- Pro-active district monitoring.
- Liaison with partner agencies such as Thames Valley Police and the trade associations.
- Facilitate the delivery of a Taxi Licensing Policy and advise elected members accordingly.

2.2.14 WATER SUPPLIES

The service will deliver the general provisions requirements of the Water Industries Act 1991 and associated Regulations. This includes;

- Routine monitoring programme for all identified private water supplies.
- Sampling and analysis of private water supplies.
- Carrying out reactive work based on risk for all private water supplies.

2.2.15 WORKING GROUPS AND COMMITTEES

The service will provide officers to participate in professional groups across different professional disciplines and internal decision making bodies. This includes, but not exclusively:

- Safety Advisory Groups
- Licensing Committees
- Berkshire EH Manager Group
- Food, H&S, Housing, Environmental Protection and Licensing Lead Officers Liaison Groups
- Community Safety Groups e.g. Safeguarding/ASB Panel
- Transport Policy Task Groups
- Civil Contingencies Liaison Group
- Health Scrutiny Committees
- Shadow Health and Wellbeing Boards/ Task Groups
- Planning Committees

This does not include any direct administration functions required by such groups. Over the course of the Agreement West Berkshire Council may include other internal departments in policy development and service delivery with the intention of improving service resilience, contract performance and/or efficiency.

2.3 FUNCTIONS DELIVERED SPECIFICALLY FOR WOKINGHAM

2.3.1 ANIMAL WARDEN

West Berkshire Council will continue to provide a service which includes:

- Dog control.
- Integrated work with animal welfare licensing.
- Advice for pet owners on nuisance matters.
- Pet promotion and education campaigns.

This is linked to the requirements of the Environmental Protection Act 1990 and the Clean Neighbourhoods and Environment Act with associated Regulations.

Over the course of the Agreement West Berkshire Council may include other internal departments in policy development and service delivery with the intention of improving service resilience, contract performance and/or efficiency.

2.3.2 OUT OF HOURS SERVICE

West Berkshire will continue to operate the current system of visiting known nuisance cases based on a service witness. This is linked to requirements under the Environmental Protection Act 1990.

Over the course of the Agreement West Berkshire Council may develop policy and service delivery with the intention of improving service resilience, contract performance and/or efficiency.

2.3.3 PEST CONTROL

West Berkshire Council will continue to provide an in-house pest control service for paying customers and internal services. This includes rodents and insect control. This is linked to the requirements of the Prevention of Damage by Pests Act 1949.

Over the course of the Agreement West Berkshire Council may include other internal departments in policy development and service delivery with the intention of improving service resilience, contract performance and/or efficiency.

2.3.4 HOUSING GRANTS/LOANS

The service will provide the system currently employed by Wokingham to delivery housing grants and loans, generally understood as;

- Contract management and supervision of the Home Improvement Agency Service (Wokingham interests only)
- Facilitate Flexible Home Improvement Loans provided by the Consortium of South East authorities

Over the course of the Agreement West Berkshire Council may include other internal departments in policy development and service delivery with the intention of improving service resilience, contract performance and/or efficiency.

2.3.5 EMPTY HOMES

The service will maintain the Wokingham function of investigating empty homes (in the Wokingham Borough) and attempt to bring them back into occupation. This is linked to the requirements of the Housing Act 2004.

Over the course of the Agreement West Berkshire Council may include other internal departments in policy development and service delivery with the intention of improving service resilience, contract performance and/or efficiency.

2.3.6 RADON MONITORING

West Berkshire Council will continue to offer a service for a fee, with certain exemptions, to provide equipment to measure radon levels in people's homes. This service will be amalgamated into the general contaminated land function of the joint service.

2.3.7 ENERGY EFFICIENCY

The Service will continue to provide Wokingham with this area of policy development.

Over the course of the Agreement West Berkshire Council may include other internal departments in policy development and service delivery with the intention of improving service resilience, contract performance and/or efficiency.

2.4 FORMATION OF POLICY AND DECISION MAKING

2.4.1 INDIVIDUAL EXECUTIVE MEMBER DECISIONS (IEMD's)

West Berkshire Council will assume responsibility for IEMD's relevant to service delivery. Wokingham will be consulted and matters specifically requested by Wokingham to be reviewed will be included in the relevant Joint Service Review Panel meeting.

2.4.2 COMMITTEES

The service will provide technical advice to Policy and Legal Officers, in addition to elected Members of the relevant Committees. Where any papers/ reports/submissions are taken to a Committee, the service will highlight to the Joint Service Review Panel all potential outcomes (where possible) and provide recommendations to deliver the best outcome for the service and its customers as a whole.

Any decisions made by Committees which have a budgetary impact on the service will be notified to the Joint Service Review Panel.

2.4.3 GENERAL POLICY

West Berkshire Council will assume responsibility for general policy relevant to service delivery. Wokingham will be consulted and specifically requested items will be considered by the Joint Service Review Panel.

2.4.4 BUSINESS SUPPORT

West Berkshire Council will continue to operate the current arrangements for the Business Support Team at Wokingham. This is understood to include the following types of function:

- Financial transactions.
- Call handling.
- Records processing and storage.
- Face to face customer services.
- Database management, audit and office protocols.

Over the course of the Agreement West Berkshire Council may include other internal departments in policy development and service delivery with the intention of improving service resilience, contract performance and/or efficiency.

2.5 EXTERNAL CONTRACTS

West Berkshire Council will honour existing Wokingham contracts which have been awarded to deliver aspects of their service. These will all need to be updated to reflect the new joint service.

Over the course of the Agreement West Berkshire Council may include other internal departments or re-tender contracts in relation to policy development and service delivery with the intention of improving service resilience, contract performance and/or efficiency.

Currently West Berkshire Council understands that the following Contracts exist:

- SDK – Out of Hours Dog Control
- Ridgeway Care and Repair – Home Improvement Agency functions
- Transparency Data – Scores on the Doors Website
- Environmental Health Case Management System – Civica
- Licensing Case Management System - LALPAC

2.6 LICENSING COMMITTEE

Each Authority will continue to have a distinct Committee for the purposes of Licensing decisions. This does not extend to any other policy matters.

- Support
Constitutional and procedural advice will remain the responsibility of each Authority's legal service, to maintain the in-house knowledge and consistency that members expect and that is appropriate for local accountability. This is also the case for all meeting administration.
- Sub-Committees
Elected Members will continue to have full control for their delegated functions. The Joint Service Delivery will ensure that each and every case referred to the appropriate Sub-Committee is properly made and in accordance with the requirements of the relevant legislation.
- Appeals/Challenges to Committee Decisions
Each Authority is responsible for its own Members decisions. Any support required to defend a decision will be provided by the originating Authority with technical Licensing advice from the Joint Service Delivery.

3 FUTURE SERVICE DELIVERY

3.1 STRUCTURE AND FUNCTIONS

West Berkshire Council, in full consultation with Wokingham Borough Council will implement a structure to align resources with the identified high risk topics and customer demands. On this basis the client, all affected staff and internal partners (where relevant) will be consulted on the following:

- **Technical and Business Support Team**
 - Frontline customer support
 - Officer support
 - Management support
 - Information management
 - Finance process management
 - Evidence management
 - Systems lead
- **Licensing Team**
Issue and Regulation of all Licences and Registrations in respect of:
 - Alcohol and places of entertainment
 - Taxi's
 - Gambling
 - Animal Welfare
 - Street Trading
 - Skin Piercing/ Tattooing
 - Lotteries and Collections.
 - Lead on smoking based Public Health
 - Technical guidance for Licensing Committees

- **Commercial Team**
 - Full remit of Food Safety and Hygiene
 - Full remit of Health, Safety and Welfare
 - Accident Investigation
 - Communicable Diseases
 - Education and Promotion of Food/Diet/Nutrition/Workplace based Public Health

- **Environmental Protection Team**
 - Commercial Nuisance
 - Air Quality Management
 - Contaminated Land
 - Planning Liaison
 - Pollution Prevention and Control

- **Public Health Team**
 - Domestic Nuisance
 - Animal Warden
 - Pest Control
 - Drainage
 - Private Water Supplies
 - Assisted Burials
 - Public Health Act remit

- **Housing Standards Team**
 - Private Sector Housing
 - Houses in Multiple Occupation Licensing
 - Disabled Facilities Grants (Wokingham only)
 - Flexible Home Improvement Loans (Wokingham only)
 - Points Assessments (West Berkshire only)
 - Immigration Inspections
 - Caravan Parks Licensing
 - Energy Efficiency based Public Health (Wokingham only)

A full communication plan on how these proposals will be investigated and published. West Berkshire Council will report to the Joint Service Review Panel on progress to improve service resilience and/ or efficiency.

4 KEY JOINT SERVICE OBJECTIVES

To deliver a high level of performance the Joint Service Delivery or JSD must incorporate both customer focussed and operational management objectives. This will ensure that the best practices from both authorities are brought together and maximise the benefits to the overall population.

Applying a process of risk management to the functions considered core to the delivery of EHL it is possible to prioritise resources. This forms the first test to identify key objectives for the service.

The second test is the application of local knowledge/intelligence to set objectives that have real meaning for the residents and businesses we serve.

4.1 CUSTOMER FOCUSED OBJECTIVES

These are the objectives that will determine how the service vision will be achieved.

4.1.1 MANAGE HIGH RISK TOPICS EFFECTIVELY

Based on analysis of each partner authority's risks it is clear that the most significant risks for the Joint Service will be (in order):

- HOUSES IN MULTIPLE OCCUPATION (HMO); Identifying and licensing the most high risk properties within the private rented sector to protect the most vulnerable tenants.
- LAND CONTAMINATION; Identifying and remediating the most high risk pieces of land using GIS and research data.
- PRIVATE SECTOR HOUSING – NON HMO; Using the Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS) to deal with poor living conditions.

4.1.2 IDENTIFY LOCAL ISSUES AND IMPROVE THEM

The top five areas of interest (based on number of individuals jobs processed 2010) for complaint or service request are 1. Noise, 2. Food Safety, 3. Air Quality, 4. Planning Consultation and 5. Health and Safety.

4.1.3 USE CUSTOMER FEEDBACK TO FOCUS SERVICES

A key feature of the feedback we receive from service users is the speed of our response to their query or complaint.

4.1.4 IMPROVE ACCESS TO INFORMATION

Maximise the ability of residents and businesses to find helpful information within a reasonable period of time.

4.1.5 MINIMISE UNECESSARY BURDEN ON BUSINESS BY USING PRIORITISED INSPECTION PROGRAMMES

Use all available information to assess the risk of all business types and deal with those posing the most.

4.2 OPERATIONAL MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES

These objectives should demonstrate ambition and drive to deliver value for money, a commitment to staff development and welfare with an honest approach to highlighting the risks posed to the organisation and its communities.

4.2.1 CLEAR AND CONCISE CORE POLICY

There should be a documented policy for all the core areas of the service. These should be publicly available and provide clarity on how the service will approach its business.

4.2.2 EFFICIENT USE OF QUALITY ASSURANCE

The service should operate a recognised framework for all documentation and decision making, this should be based on ISO processes. Transparency should be the guiding principle for ensuring all employees know exactly what is expected of them.

4.2.3 HONEST AND TRANSPARENT RISK MANAGEMENT

Areas of core business should be assessed in such a way that the organisations understand the risk associated with services provided. Communication should be clear and concise to aid decision making.

4.2.4 PROACTIVE AND RESPONSIBLE WORKFORCE PLANNING

Given the size of the workforce, it is the largest and most important service asset and should be protected, nurtured and developed.

4.2.5 CONSISTENT AND PRACTICAL PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT

All staff should feel they are treated with respect and managers should be able to discuss performance with confidence. Accurate information, clear guidelines and rules are fundamental to a high performing service. Monitoring should take place but information should only be used where exceptions are noted.

5 INTERNAL SUPPORT SERVICES

5.1 LEGAL

Wokingham Borough Council and West Berkshire District Council will be distinct in respect to all operational legal support. Functions to be delivered by each Legal service, dependent on service demand are:

- Preparation and attendance at court proceedings.
- Advice from competent legal practitioners.
- Attendance at routine enforcement group meetings.
- Constitutional advice for decisions of all types e.g. Committees
- Case file review and application of Enforcement Policy.
- Claims, liabilities and costs awards.

Key features to note:

- All investigations and case files will be produced by officers of the service and presented to the relevant Legal service.
- Each Council will proceed with cases relevant to their own area – however it should be noted that Wokingham Legal Service will abide by the West Berkshire Enforcement Policy to maintain a level of consistency.
- All legal support as listed above will be provided at the request of the Environmental Health and Licensing Manager.
- The operation of Licensing Committees is addressed in section 2.6.

This position will be reviewed annually from the start date of the contract.

5.2 FINANCE

West Berkshire District Council will deliver all operational financial support needs with the following exceptions:

- Service accountant support from Wokingham to analyse income data through the WISE system, including fees and charges reviews and the equalisation funds relevant to Licensing functions.

- Routine operational income budget monitoring paid via Wokingham.
- Means Testing for the purposes of delivering housing grants for Wokingham Borough residents.

The Joint Service Review Panel will monitor the budget management process in accordance with its terms of reference within the Agreement.

5.3 INFORMATION, COMMUNICATION AND TECHNOLOGY (ICT)

Wokingham Borough Council will provide non-Newbury based staff with distinct suitable and sufficient ICT services and equipment in line with their current standards and agreements. Areas to be included, but not exclusively are:

- Laptops, PC's and Telephones
- Connections and network support to all hardware
- Advice on development opportunities
- Maintenance of all hardware and software
- IT Helpdesk facilities
- Data security advice (this will include a policy review to align practices where possible in consultation with both ICT Services)

An ICT Strategy (see section 5) for the JSD will provide direction for the progression of ICT.

5.4 PROPERTY

Wokingham will provide suitable and sufficient accommodation, maintenance and repair for all Wokingham based staff as delivered by current agreements and standards with internal partners. Areas to be included, but not exclusively are:

- Buildings and mains services
- Equipment and facilities
- Car parks
- Evidence storage

An Accommodation Strategy (see section 6) for the JSD will provide direction for the progression of accommodation matters.

5.5 BENEFITS AND EXCHEQUER

West Berkshire Council will meet all operational needs. This does not include:

- Cash office arrangements for Wokingham offices.
- Income recovery from payments made to Wokingham offices – this will be incorporated into monthly transfers.
- Technical advice from Transactional Finance for Wokingham processes.

5.6 CUSTOMER SERVICES

West Berkshire Council will meet operational customer support needs. This does not include:

- Wokingham based front desk/reception staff
- Call redirect services/ call centre functions based at Wokingham

5.7 HUMAN RESOURCES

West Berkshire Council will provide all operational HR support needs. Areas to be included, but not exclusively are:

- Advice on policy and procedure (recruitment, discipline and performance)
- Staff contracts, terms and conditions
- Recruitment administration
- Resourcelink management

5.8 POLICY AND COMMUNICATION

West Berkshire Council will provide the service with support for general operational requirements except the following:

- Administrative and process support for Wokingham Committee and Sub-Committee functions.
- Formal complaints elevated beyond the Service Manager which refer specifically to work undertaken by the service in the Wokingham Borough.
- Advice and guidance on matters of data security, freedom of information and public registers where the data is held at Wokingham offices or on Wokingham specific databases outside the control of the Service Manager.
- Administration and process support for Data Protection requests relevant to Wokingham case management and any information held at Wokingham offices.

6 QUALITY MANAGEMENT SYSTEM

6.1 ACCREDITATION

West Berkshire acknowledges that a feature of the current Wokingham Environmental Health services is that they are assessed and accredited by ISO.

West Berkshire Council will review the new services policy, procedure and officer guidelines to align methods of assessment and accreditation to produce a single overarching system.

This is reflected in the JSD Operational Management Objectives (Ref: 4.2.2) and will play a significant role in the project planning to improve the efficiencies, effectiveness and resilience of the new joint service.

6.2 LINKS TO ICT STRATEGY

West Berkshire Council acknowledges that it is fundamental to the adoption of a single Quality Management System (QMS) to deliver an effective ICT Strategy.

The service will engage and consult with all partners who have an interest in QMS delivery and the objectives of the strategy to ensure that there is capability to operate an electronic QMS for the full duration of the contract and potentially beyond.

7 ICT STRATEGY

To address the challenges that face the new service, West Berkshire Council will construct and implement a strategy that aims to deliver the following:

- Provide a medium to long term view of the joint service ICT requirements.
- Embed ICT consultation into the project management of EHL systems.
- Develop management approaches towards ICT procurement which improves integration with corporate systems.
- Consider the Wokingham arrangements with Northgate and engage with them to maximise opportunities for service resilience and efficiencies.

7.1 INFORMATION MANAGEMENT DATABASES

West Berkshire Council will, where possible, review all systems which contribute to the effective running of frontline services and tested them for integration potential. Where this is done a cost benefit analysis will be produced for the JSRP.

For clarity the service will not pursue full integration between the differing Case Management systems (Flare and Uniform) within the initial 5 year contract.

It is anticipated that the Licensing Case Management system will be reviewed, in consultation with staff, internal support services and the contractor within the term of the agreement to identify any potential gains in service resilience and/or efficiency.

The service will also ensure that any decisions relevant to case management are taken in full consultation with our Trading Standards colleagues so that they may benefit from any investment, knowledge or learning experienced. Re-use, sharing and scalability should be fundamental tests in any future cost-benefit decisions.

All projects which have a foreseeable impact on our relationship with corporate services will be initiated through the agreed Project Management Model. As part of the overall JSD and to ensure project transparency, Wokingham will be fully consulted on any such projects.

7.2 ELECTRONIC DOCUMENT RECORD MANAGEMENT

'MARVIN' (informal name for EDRMS) is a central feature of West Berkshire EHL services.

The service will review the business case for integrating MARVIN with Wokingham data over the term of the agreement and, subject to consultation with the JSRP, any progress which can be achieved to increase service resilience and/or efficiency will be pursued.

7.3 TELEPHONE CALL MANAGEMENT

A review of all hardware and software associated with call management, across both authorities, will be undertaken within the first 3 years of agreement commencing. Any progress that can be made to enhance service resilience and/or efficiency in this area should be pursued.

8 ACCOMODATION STRATEGY

West Berkshire Council recognises that cost effective accommodation needs to be provided for Council staff and is an important factor in the success of the council. However, cost effective accommodation is not the same as cheap accommodation. Attracting and retaining good quality staff, who are able to carry out effective work in a suitable, but efficiently run, environment is a key aim.

In summary, the ongoing provision and effective management of appropriate accommodation is recognised as a key strategic resource issue such that:

- Accommodation must be effective and fit for purpose.
- The Council will benefit through the positive effect on staff of providing appropriate accommodation.
- The adverse impact of inappropriate and poor accommodation will be avoided.
- The "top three" issues - accommodation, human resources and information technology - are interlinked and will be considered together to implement a successful people-centred workspace strategy.

8.1 OFFICE SPACE

Currently the offices at Market Street, Newbury and Shute End, Wokingham are the allocated work locations for staff across the joint service.

The link between a 'central' office and satellite units / service buildings must be considered on a strategic level. The release of potentially surplus property and the return of staff to a more effective and efficient 'joined up' central core is a key consideration and will be implemented wherever possible throughout the term of the contract. At the same time, it may be appropriate to consider alternative location options for staff where this might be achieved without detriment to service delivery e.g. Turnhams Green, Calcot.

The MARVIN project will be a key element of delivering effective use of office space and the services ability to centralise functions. In considering the centralisation of office accommodation, the provision and form of the front service desk facility is clearly important.

This will need to be looked at in conjunction with other services represented at the front desk and ensure that these services achieve a joined-up approach.

8.2 FLEXIBLE WORKING (TIMELORD AND SMART WORKING SOLUTIONS)

All office accommodation being used for delivering the service will be operated under a flexible working initiative. The specifics of this will be determined by the governing groups responsible for each of the buildings currently operated. This generally places a ratio of 5:3 (desk to staff) for those in Market Street and 2:1 for those at Shute End.

Over the term of the contract there will be a review of this to assess overall impact on productivity and service quality to determine whether harmonisation of ratios is desirable.

As part of any accommodation decisions proper regard should be had to the West Berkshire Council Mobile and Flexible Working Policy and the equivalent Policy statements from Wokingham BC.