

Appendix A - Joint Implementing e-Government Statement on collaborative working in Warwickshire via the Warwickshire On Line Partnership

Introduction

Since the submission of our last IEG in July 2001 our partnership arrangements in the e-Government arena have further developed as follows:-

- In January 2002 we formally submitted a bid to the LGOL Partnership fund based on the joint working of the Warwickshire authorities
- In June 2002, the partnership was informed that it had been awarded £2,000,000 funding for joint Local Government OnLine partnership projects. The award was made in the Shared Delivery Partnership category and was the joint top award made to any partnerships
- On the 30th September, in response to a request from the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister, we submitted details of our progress and plans for using the funds to support our partnership working. A summary of this information is reproduced below.

Partnership management arrangements

- For the last eight months a Joint Officer e-Champions and ICT Managers Group, reporting directly to the Warwickshire Association of Chief Executives, has managed our partnership working.
- We are introducing more formal management arrangements, and are developing a Memorandum of Understanding, rather than creating a new legal entity. All partners are currently considering a draft of this document and it is hoped that this will be approved by 31st October. This will include the appointment of a new Partnership Board.
- We have appointed an Interim Partnership Project Manager, to move the joint initiatives forward pending confirmation of the receipt of the partnership funds and are about to advertise for a Warwickshire On Line Programme manager.

Progress of, and Plans for the Joint Partnership Projects

Joint Warwickshire Wide Contact Centre

A joint project team involving members of the partnership, and a representative from Warwickshire Police was formed in January 2002. This project team has :-

- Developed a proposal for a project to investigate the feasibility of a joint contact centre. We will appoint external consultants to assist us with this study.
- Submitted an invitation to tender via the S-CAT process in early September.
- Received responses to this tender and will be selecting the preferred supplier by mid-November

The study will run from late November until February 2003 and will report findings, and options, if deemed to be feasible, to the partnership board at the end of February 2003.

Warwickshire Broadband Project

The County Council are currently installing a broadband network based on wireless line of sight technology. We are currently planning to provide connections to all of the District Councils, to support specific joint business initiatives. However we also plan to: -

- Explore shared Internet access, offering enhanced services, increased resilience, and reduced joint costs of ownership.
- To appoint consultants to assist us to review the feasibility of: -
 - Offering broadband services to the business community in Warwickshire
 - Developing links to any regional or sub regional Broadband Initiatives

We plan to appoint the consultants in December 2002 and complete the feasibility study by June 2003

Other Joint Initiatives

- **Sharing Joint systems:** We are continuing to share systems wherever sensible. Four of the six partners are, or are about to, use the same committee administration system. Three councils are about to use the same new payroll system currently being implemented.
- **Web sites:** The Warwickshire Councils' websites were particularly commended for their 'joined-up-ness' in the 2002 SOCITM survey of web sites. However we plan to increase their integration still further by exploring the potential for shared e-forms, search facilities, and citizen sign on routines.
- **Process Mapping:** Recognised as a key area in achieving e-Government, we will collaborate on process mapping activity in the authorities.
- **ISB Projects:** We are also continuing to work bi-laterally on a series of other projects, including the Invest to Save Projects, Silver Surfers and UTOPIA (Using Technology for Older People: Information and Action).

External Partnership Liaison

We are also increasing the areas where the partnership operates as a representative of the constituent members.

- We submitted joint expressions of interest to the ODPM national project invitations issued through e-Gov@local. For eight of the projects, one council is operating as a representative of all the Warwickshire Councils.
- We have also submitted a single representative to the WMLGA Smart Region Group, and will continue to work collaboratively in this area. The SMART Region represents the joint ambition of the 38 West Midlands local authorities, working through WMLGA, to make information and communications technologies a cornerstone of the region's economic and

social future. It is supported by the West Midlands Regional Assembly and by Advantage West Midlands (AWM).

Partnership Statements of Intent

At a strategic level we will continue to work towards the following statements of intent.

In developing services for our citizens through the introduction of electronic service options we will: -

- Explore opportunities for providing new seamless services jointly with other partner organisations
- In developing new structures and delivery mechanisms for our existing services we will explore the potential for re-engineering them with partner organisations to provide even better integrated services for the public.
- Explore options for joint purchase of all major new systems
- Explain opportunities for sharing replicable developments with other partner organisations
- Explore opportunities for sharing of information with partners where appropriate