



**Report Reference Number: E/21/29**

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<b>To:</b>	<b>Executive</b>
<b>Date:</b>	<b>2 December 2021</b>
<b>Status:</b>	<b>Key Decision</b>
<b>Ward(s) Affected:</b>	<b>All</b>
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<b>Lead Executive Member:</b>	<b>Cllr Mark Crane, Leader of the Council</b>
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**Title: Better Together Collaboration: Extension of Legal Services - Service Level Agreement to 31 March 2023**

### **Summary:**

This report seeks Executive approval to extend the present collaboration with North Yorkshire County Council Legal Services until 31 March 2023 to align with the local government reorganisation timeline.

### **Recommendations:**

That the Better Together Legal Service Level Agreement with North Yorkshire County Council be extended until 31 March 2023.

### **Reasons for recommendation**

The present Service Level Agreement expires on 31 December 2021. As Local Government Reorganisation will result in the abolition of Selby District Council on 31 March 2023, and district functions will then be transferred to the new North Yorkshire Council it is appropriate to extend the shared legal service delivery to enable continuation of the legal service to Selby District Council and facilitation of a safe and legal transition of functions to the new Council on 1 April 2023.

## **1. Introduction and background**

**1.1** The Service Level Agreement with NYCC Legal Services under the Better Together Collaboration Agreement has been in place since April 2018. The Solicitor to the

Council monitors the contract and meets regularly with the NYCC Legal Services Manager to direct and manage the resource appropriately to SDC client departments. All legal disciplines excluding governance, planning law and major project legal work is provided to SDC by NYCC.

- 1.2 The governance and planning law advice is provided by the SDC in house solicitor and the Solicitor to the Council. Both also act as intelligent client in respect of major projects to ensure use of external legal resource is focussed and used effectively.
- 1.3 The shared service arrangement was only extended to 31 December 2021 so that the direction of the Local Government Reorganisation could be factored into any decision about extending the arrangement further.
- 1.4 This report seeks Executive approval to extend the arrangement on the same terms until 31 March 2023 to align with the local government reorganisation timetable.

## **2. Terms of the Shared Service Arrangement**

- 2.1 The arrangement provides a base of 4900 hours of legal work per year. The total cost of the base service is estimated for 21/22 to be £200,333.20, and for 22/23 to be £204,339.86. In 21/22 hours above 4900 are charged at £128.28. In 22/23 it will be £130.85.

## **3. Alternative Options Considered**

The only other option would be to bring the service back in house. In light of Local Government Reorganisation this is not a credible option in that the focus is now on working to bring all legal resources together in the new North Yorkshire Council to achieve a safe and legal transition of Council functions by April 2023.

## **4. Implications**

### **4.1 Legal Implications**

To provide continued robust legal advice to the Council in the lead up to LGR the extension of the shared service is recommended. The contract will continue to be monitored to make best use of public resources and support the Council as a whole.

### **4.2 Financial Implications**

The cost of the service achieves best value.

### **4.3 Policy and Risk Implications**

Not continuing the service and bringing the service in house would be at odds with the collaborative working arrangements with NYCC to achieve a smooth transition into the new North Yorkshire Council.

### **4.4 Corporate Plan Implications**

The extension continues the collaboration between NYCC and SDC and provides for working together to shape the new Council.

#### **4.5 Resource Implications**

Finance have been consulted and agree the cost achieves best value.

#### **4.6 Other Implications**

None.

#### **4.7 Equalities Impact Assessment**

None.

### **5. Conclusion**

The present Service Level Agreement expires on 31 December 2021. As Local Government Reorganisation will result in the abolition of Selby District Council on 31 March 2023, and district functions will then be transferred to the new North Yorkshire Council, it is appropriate to extend the shared legal service delivery to enable continuation of the legal service to Selby District Council and facilitation of a safe and legal transition of functions to the new Council on 1 April 2023.

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