



JOINTLY OWNED BY



Analysis of collaboration benefits

21st November 2024





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Executive Summary

Introduction and our approach

Local Partnerships, as a consultancy that is part owned by the Local Government Association (LGA), has been funded to assist Guildford and Waverley Councils understand the benefits of their collaboration to date and the nature and potential value of further collaborative opportunities.

The organisations currently have a shared Chief Executive and Joint Leadership Team (JLT) and are pursuing a programme of change based on service transformation and collaboration.

Although broad political support remains in place for a continuation of the programme, the absence of a business case means there is no reference to assess progress against or an agreed definition of what the programme should be seeking to do going forward. Our work has been informed by input from the councils' JLT and taken account of the views of party leaders and senior members from the political parties represented on both councils.

We have assessed the councils' own data, relative to other published data and considered the changes that have occurred since the start of the collaboration up until the current period.

We have drawn on our insight of collaborations elsewhere amongst district councils and shared these in a workshop environment with the councils' JLT. This was part of gaining their view of what is possible going forward and the associated deliverability implications.

Benefits of collaboration to date

It can be clearly demonstrated that the creation of the JLT in 2022 has saved Guildford Borough Council (GBC) and Waverley Borough Council (WBC) more money than it cost and that this net benefit will continue to grow, given that the costs were a one-off and the direct savings continue into the future.

The question as to whether this has come at a wider cost to one or both councils is harder to answer but, on the basis of available information, this does not appear to be the case.

There has been no deterioration in performance detectable from service KPIs and while some aspects of corporate expenditure have increased, the overall cost base of both councils was lower as at the end of 2023/24 than it would have been had no changes taken place since the end of 2020/21.

The staffing element of the cost base, upon which collaborative activity has largely been focussed on to date, has increased by less than would have been expected given pay increases that have prevailed, with 60% of this variance being directly attributable to the collaboration. This helped place the councils in the lowest quintile of employee cost increases seen across its 'nearest neighbour' grouping.

Ultimately, it is impossible to state with certainty that the overall position of GBC and WBC is better or worse as a result of the collaboration but there is no obvious evidence pointing to it being negative at this stage, given that the overall cost base, in real terms, is lower with no evident deterioration in performance. It has also provided a platform to pursue a range of further opportunities with the potential to deliver significantly greater savings than achieved to date.

Nature and potential size of further collaborative opportunities

GBC and WBC are now at a crossroads and need to decide whether to build on the platform created or move back to their previous states. It would be unprecedented to stay in the current position of having a JLT but no meaningful sharing of services as a result.

The council partnerships across the country that have gone on to share services have saved significant sums of money, albeit when both the capacity to support such programmes of change and the levels of savings achievable were more significant.

Nevertheless, it is evident that the appetite and conviction exists in the JLT to progress the type of opportunities highlighted in this report and to do so within a 3 year period.

On the basis that each of these opportunities will be supported by business case work, with only those progressed where it can be confidently demonstrated that they are likely to generate more benefit than cost, then expanding the collaboration should only enhance the existing net benefit delivered to date.



Introduction

Background

Guildford and Waverley Councils have embarked on a partnership that is intended to help sustain services in response to growing financial pressures. The organisations currently have a shared Chief Executive and Joint Management Team (JLT) and are pursuing a programme of change based on service transformation and collaboration.

Although broad political support remains in place for a continuation of the programme, the absence of a business case means there is no reference to assess progress against or an agreed definition of what the programme should be seeking to do going forward. There is a need for an objective, independent set of facts to underpin the decision-making of both councils. There has been work undertaken to identify potentially beneficial partnering arrangements, but this was last year and a product of 'bottom-up' service level reviews. It is felt that there could be more substantial opportunities identified by taking a strategic perspective and also a value in looking at the experiences of other councils who have adopted similar partnership models.

About this work

Each year the LGA passports grant to Local Partnerships as part of its sector led improvement offer to deliver:

- activities that are predominately free at the point of delivery to English councils
- activities aligned with LGA and councils' priorities, and
- the development of new programmes and services with the potential to add significant value to local government.

This year the LGA is providing funding for Local Partnerships to provide consultancy support under the theme of transformation. The support can be used flexibly, and the work is expected to benefit the sector as a whole through the sharing of case studies and key learning across peer networks with participation in such activities being a condition of support.

Guildford and Waverley Councils were successful in requesting the support of Local Partnerships through this funding to provide:

- an independent assessment of the benefits secured to date through joint working, and the costs.
- an analysis of the potential size and nature of further opportunities for cost saving or outcome improvements through collaboration.

Further detail about Local Partnerships can be found in Appendix 1.



Our approach

Assessing the benefits of collaboration to date

We have worked with members of the councils' JLT to understand the changes in organisational structures, systems, processes and asset base that have occurred as a result of the joint working to date.

We have assessed the councils' own data against this understanding and considered the changes that have occurred since the start of the collaboration up until the current period.

As part of this, we have sought to account for material changes that would have affected the costs of the council over the period had the two councils stayed as they were pre-collaboration.

We have also considered whether there have been any non-monetary costs and benefits arising from the collaboration. This took account of the views of party leaders and senior members from the political parties represented on both councils that were expressed in an on-line consultation meeting held as part of our work.

Assessing the nature and potential size of further opportunities for cost saving or outcome improvement

We have drawn on our insight of collaborations elsewhere amongst district councils and shared these in a workshop environment with the councils' JLT. This was part of gaining their view of what is possible going forward and the associated deliverability implications.

Our work has also involved collating a summary of the benefits achieved by those collaborations.

The outputs have been reflected in a SWOT analysis of the individual opportunities that have emerged as worthwhile for the JLT to pursue.



Assessing the benefits of collaboration to date

Our understanding of the position

The main changes that have taken place to date have been the establishment of a shared chief executive post and creation of a JLT.

There have also been a number of initiatives that have been pursued jointly by the two councils and the establishment of a Transformation and Collaboration programme.

We have assessed the direct costs and benefits associated with these and considered the existence of any material wider costs or benefits resulting from the changes.

Restructuring of the senior team

In December 2021, the chief executive of Waverley Borough Council (WBC) took up the position of joint chief executive and head of paid service for both WBC and Guildford Borough Council (GBC). The separate head of paid service roles in each council were made redundant and contractual termination and pension contribution payments were made on behalf of the departing GBC Managing Director who had fulfilled that role.

The establishment of a joint head of paid service precipitated the creation of a JLT which led to senior posts in both councils being made redundant over the summer of 2022 with this new shared structure being established by October 2022. Again, this involved a number of termination payments being made on behalf of officers who were made redundant as a result of the process. There were also professional services fees incurred for specialist legal and HR advice with regard to the establishment of the new structure.

We have been given the pay data for the roles affected by the changes described above and also the termination and professional services payments that were made and corroborated those with the values in the published accounts of both councils.

Assessing the benefits of collaboration to date

Restructuring of the senior team - continued

Table 1a and Table 1b, below, shows the difference in costs actually incurred since the re-structure took place and what would have been incurred had the senior management teams of both councils remained unchanged.

Table 1a shows the position as if no cost of living increases had occurred and salaries had stayed at 2021/22 levels while Table 1b shows the position in reality, reflecting actual cost of living increases.

Table 1a: cost benefit assessment of the JMT at '21/22 price base

Direct savings		Total
		£'000s
Senior management costs (4Q '21/22 to 3Q '24/25)		
	Actual	6,816
	If no re-structure	8,475
	Saving	(1,659)
	Cost of re-structure	1,143
	Benefit cost ratio	1.45:1

All values at '21/22 price base i.e. exclude cost of living increases

Table 1b: cost benefit assessment of the JMT including wage inflation

Direct savings		Total
		£'000s
Senior management costs (4Q '21/22 to 3Q '24/25)		
	Actual	7,167
	If no re-structure	8,930
	Saving	(1,762)
	Cost of re-structure	1,159
	Benefit cost ratio	1.52:1

All values inflated to reflect cost of living increases

The tables show that the direct benefits have exceeded direct costs by approximately 50% with these being slightly greater if the impact of saved cost of living increases on the higher salary bill is accounted for, as per Table 1b. These benefits will continue to accumulate whereas the costs that facilitated them remain a constant, thus this percentage will continue to increase over time.

A profile of the costs that produce the total values in Table 1b are shown in Appendix 2.

Assessing the benefits of collaboration to date - continued

Organisational level impact of the collaboration

The table below shows what the cost base of WBC and GBC would have been for 2023/24 had it remained at pre-collaboration levels i.e.; 2020/21 and changed only for the impact of inflation and pay rises given to staff. It shows that the combined cost bases of GBC and WBC are £30.1m lower than what they would have been had each council spent the same amount that they did in the last full year prior to collaboration. The direct benefit of the JLT in terms of saved senior management costs per annum equates to £0.8m at 2023/24 price levels so contributing to just 2.8% of this saving, albeit c. 60% of the staff saving.

Table 2: comparing changes in the real cost base

Guildford and Waverley Councils			
	Staff	Non-staff	Total
Actual position at 31 Mar 21 (£m)	60.9	113.1	174.0
<i>Projected % impact over 3 years of pay increases and inflation</i>	9.8%	28.6%	22.0%
<i>Projected % annualised impact of pay increases and inflation</i>	3.2%	8.7%	6.9%
<i>Projected figure for 31 Mar 24 based upon 3 years of pay increases and inflation (£m)</i>	66.8	145.5	212.3
Actual position at 31 Mar 24 (£m)	65.4	116.8	182.2
Difference between actual and projected (£m)	1.4	28.6	30.1
<i>Actual % impact over 3 years of pay increases and inflation</i>	7.4%	3.3%	4.7%
<i>Annual saving in senior management costs as a result of the JLT at 2023/24 prices</i>	0.8	0.0	0.8
% JLT contribution to saving	58.3%	0.0%	2.8%

Assessing the benefits of collaboration to date - continued

Organisational level impact - continued

It is unrealistic, however, to assume that the cost base as it was at the end of 2020/21 would have stayed the same over the subsequent years even if the collaboration had not taken place. There is a need to recognise that some of the cost changes, both negative and positive, that are reflected in the actual 2023/24 position have no association with the collaboration and that using an indexed 2020/21 position as a comparator has limitations. Some of the organisational wide cost reduction is a result of service reductions and saving initiatives undertaken independently by both councils. Similarly, there have been cost increases that would have been incurred anyway as a result of rising demand-led service pressures and factors unrelated to the collaboration. In order to identify a reliable counterfactual position and isolate the impact of the collaboration, it would be necessary to disaggregate and quantify the different movements above. Unfortunately, the data is unavailable to perform an exercise to this level of detail. However, we are aware of concern that there has been a rise in spend on interim support over the period since the JLT was established. This increase is shown in Table 3 below. The two biggest increases in spend have been experienced in the Planning and Legal service areas, both of which represent nationally challenging areas for recruiting and retaining staff. Appendix 3 provides some evidence of this. It is also noteworthy that despite this increase, overall staff spend is lower than it would otherwise have been under staffing levels at the start of the JLT period, as per Table 2 on the previous page.

Table 3: Analysis of combined agency and temporary staff spend by WBC and GBC

Analysis of agency and temporary staff spend				
Service area	2021/22	2023/24	Difference	% of total difference
	£m			
Assets & Property	0.0	0.1	0.1	3%
Commercial Services	0.4	0.1	-0.4	-13%
Communications & Customer Services	0.2	0.2	0.0	1%
Community Services	0.1	0.5	0.3	12%
Environment	0.7	1.1	0.4	12%
Finance	1.0	1.4	0.3	11%
Housing - GF	0.2	0.1	-0.1	-2%
Joint Management Team	0.0	0.2	0.2	7%
Legal & Democratic Services	0.2	0.9	0.8	26%
Organisational Development	0.5	0.0	-0.5	-17%
Planning Development	0.5	2.0	1.5	51%
Regeneration & Planning Policy	0.3	0.5	0.2	5%
Regulatory Services	0.0	0.1	0.1	4%
Total	4.3	7.2	2.9	

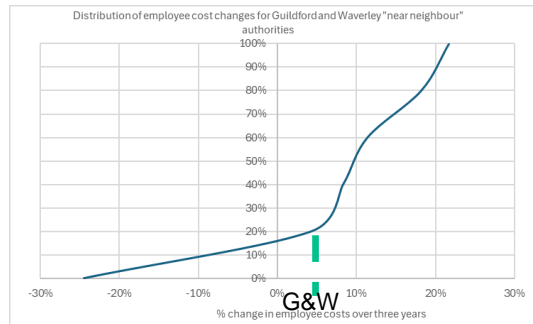
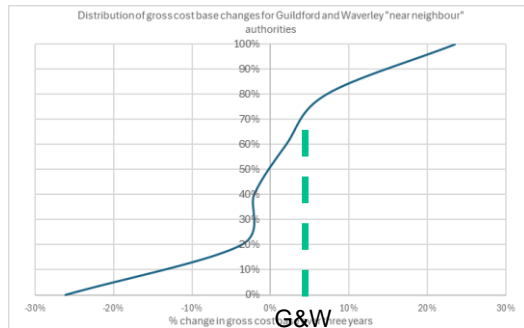
Assessing the benefits of collaboration to date - continued

Cost movement compared to other similar authorities

We have sought to get further comfort that the apparent direct net benefit of the collaboration is not masking a wider organisational cost by looking at other similar councils to GBC and WBC who have not been involved in collaborative activity to see how their cost base has moved over the same period. CIPFA has produced a model for identifying similar councils for benchmarking purposes <https://www.cipfa.org/services/cipfastats/nearest-neighbour-model>. GBC and WBC each have a list of councils that are considered 'nearest neighbours' for comparator purposes and we have analysed how the cost bases of those councils have moved over the period that GBC and WBC have been in collaboration. We have relied on the published accounts of the councils for our information but, in some instances, the accounts for 2023/24 are not yet available. The list of 'nearest neighbour' councils that we have been able to use in our analysis is shown at Appendix 4 along with the associated cost values.

An important caveat to this analysis is that the individual councils have their own local circumstances as well as initiatives to save money which makes it difficult to be precise about how much the cost base of GBC and WBC should have changed in the absence of the collaboration.

The graphs below show the distribution of percentage changes for the gross cost bases and employee costs of the 'nearest neighbour' authorities over the period between 2021/22 and 2023/24 and where GBC and WBC, combined, are positioned..



The first graph shows that the 4.7% increase in the combined gross cost base of GBC and WBC, as per Table 2 in slide 8, ranks within the fourth quintile of the "nearest neighbour" group range, with this extending from a 26% decrease to a 23% increase. Approximately 70% of the group have experienced between a -10% to +10% change with GBC and WBC falling within this range. The second graph shows that the 7.4% increase in the combined employee costs of GBC and WBC rank within the lowest quintile of the 'nearest neighbour' group range, with this extending from a 24% decrease to a 22% increase. Approximately 70% of the group have experienced between a 5% and 20% increase with GBC and WBC positioned at the lower end of this range.

On the basis of the analysis above, the cost movements over the last three years for GBC and WBC do not appear to be materially different to those of its "nearest neighbour" benchmarking group.

Assessing the benefits of collaboration to date - continued

Non-cash costs and benefits

As well as the monetary costs and benefits that we have been considering, it is also important to recognise the non-cash cost and benefits that are associated with the collaboration. In this context, we are referring to those which do not directly impact either the income received, or expenditure incurred by each council. With more time and data, it may be possible to quantify these and incorporate them into the benefit assessment.

Benefits

The table below sets out the type of initiatives that the collaboration has facilitated, and the type of non-cash benefits they have delivered.

Table 4: non-monetary benefits achieved

Benefit of sharing	Functions	Learning	Service provision	Policies	Consultation responses
Cost avoidance	✓	✓	✓		
Efficiency			✓	✓	
Outcomes	✓	✓			
Productivity			✓		✓
Resilience	✓	✓	✓		

An explanation of each type of benefit is as follows:

- Cost avoidance – have not had to recruit interims as been able to draw on the larger team to temporarily pick up responsibilities
- Greater efficiency– refined processes and adopted better ways of working to deliver the same or greater service demands with less resources
- Improved outcomes – achieved better performance outcomes as result of one or more factors arising from the collaboration, for example, more capacity leading to better responsiveness
- Improved productivity – sustained or expanded outputs with less resource
- Increased resilience – dealt with incidents that have temporarily required more capacity or particular skills by having access to a larger pool of staff

A list of the initiatives that have been delivered per category shown in Table 4 is provided in Appendix 5.

Assessing the benefits of collaboration to date - continued

Non-cash costs and benefits - continued

Costs

There are non-cash costs that can arise from a JLT collaboration which are highlighted by those councils who have either progressed from JLT collaborations onto merging their organisations or have chosen to end their collaboration. The type of costs and concerns that have been sighted by such examples and also Members from GBC and WBC are:

- The capacity of senior officers to support twice as many council meetings in terms of briefings, report writing and attendance.
- Cost of interims brought into replace permanent staff who have moved on due to job security concerns
- Cost of additional resource needed to support change programmes and respond to reduced senior level capacity and productivity

Both councils have a performance monitoring framework to assess performance against corporate indicators key performance indicators (KPIs) . A review of these, as shown in Appendix 6, reveals no obvious deterioration in overall performance for either council over the period that the collaboration has been in place.

Assessing the benefits of collaboration to date - continued

Conclusion

It can be clearly demonstrated that the creation of the JLT in 2022 has saved GBC and WBC more money than it cost and that this net benefit will continue to grow, given that the costs were a one-off and the direct savings continue into the future.

The question as to whether this has come at a wider cost to one or both councils is harder to answer but, on the basis of available information, this does not appear to be the case.

There has been no deterioration in performance detectable from service KPIs and while some aspects of corporate expenditure have increased e.g. temporary staff, the overall cost base of both councils was lower as at the end of 2023/24 than it would have been had no changes taken place since the end of 2020/21.

The staffing element of the cost base, upon which collaborative activity has largely been focussed on to date, has increased by less than would have been expected given pay increases that have prevailed, with 60% of this variance being directly attributable to the collaboration. This helped place the councils in the lowest quintile of employee cost increases seen across its 'nearest neighbour' grouping.

Ultimately, it is impossible to state with certainty that the overall position of GBC and WBC is better or worse as a result of the collaboration but there is no obvious evidence pointing to it being negative at this stage, given that the overall cost base, in real terms, is lower with no evident deterioration in performance. It has also provided a platform to pursue a range of further opportunities with the potential to deliver significantly greater savings than achieved to date, as considered in the next section of this report.

Assessing the nature and potential size of further opportunities for cost saving or outcome improvement

What has been achieved elsewhere

There are numerous examples of district councils collaborating to share functions and services, some of which are very recent while others have been in place for over 15 years. A number have gone on to merge and become single authorities.

Table 5 summarises examples for the main type of approaches adopted and the value of savings they have reported.

It would be incorrect to assume similar levels of savings are achievable for GBC and WBC on the basis of these examples.

As can be seen from Table 5, many of these partnerships were established 10 to 15 years ago, since which time many millions of pounds of resources have been taken out of the sector as a result of funding cuts. Nevertheless, there are meaningful savings which can still be secured by advancing the current collaboration and this was confirmed in a recent workshop we facilitated with the JLT. These opportunities are considered further overleaf.

Table 5: Analysis of other district level collaborations

Type	Example	Combined NRE (£m)*	Established	Benefit details
Merged districts	West Suffolk (formerly Forest Heath and St Edmundsbury)	29	In partnership since 2010, merged in 2019	Saved £4m pa over a 4 year period to 2018 via shared services, targeted £0.5m cash and £0.35m from non-cash savings through merging
	East Suffolk (formerly Suffolk Coastal and Waveney)	32	In partnership since 2013, merged in 2019	Achieved £1m pa savings via single staff model involving 64% of the workforce, identified £1.3m further savings from merging.
Separate districts, single workforce	Eastbourne and Lewes Councils	41	2015	Saved c.£9m over 4 years from 2015 by aligning ICT, single front line service operating model, disposal and leasing of surplus assets, new single Revenues & Benefits system
	South Hams and West Devon	34	2016	£6.2m pa savings since 2016 through single workforce operating model
	South Oxfordshire and Vale of White Horse	63	2008	£1.4m pa savings from shared services
	High Peak and Staffordshire Moorlands	31	2008	Over £1m pa savings from single workforce
	Babergh and Mid-Suffolk	9	2011	c.£2m pa savings from single workforce
	Bromsgrove and Redditch	26	2008	c.£2m pa savings of which £800k from a joint management team, £200k single finance team and £200k single waste collection service
Separate SMT, single workforce	Cotswold, Forest of Dean, Cheltenham, West Oxfordshire	80	2016	c.£2m pa by sharing back office functions as well as regulatory, housing and Revenues & Benefits
Joint SMT, shared functions and services	Guildford and Waverley	97	2022	Saved c.£800k pa through a joint management team
	Brentwood and Rochford	21		c.£70k from shared chief executive
Separate SMT, shared functions and services	Watford and Three Rivers	50	2009	c.£2m pa from shared back office services - finance, HR, ICT and Revenues and Benefits



Assessing the nature and potential size of further opportunities for cost saving or outcome improvement

What could be achieved in Guildford and Waverley

In 2021, Local Partnerships were asked to assess the potential value of savings that could be achieved through greater collaboration between GBC and WBC. The report made clear that the analysis upon which it made its conclusions had limitations and that further work would need to be undertaken as part of subsequent due diligence and a business case. It also noted the differences in operating models between the two councils for major service areas such as waste collection and grounds maintenance. Nevertheless, alongside savings achievable through a JLT which has subsequently been implemented, it also saw value in exploring shared central functions such as finance, procurement, HR and ICT. These were reaffirmed as areas to explore by JLT in the recent workshop we facilitated. These are all areas that have been successfully shared by other councils, including those examples in Table 5. The other areas that were also confirmed as worthwhile to initiate were:

- Bringing WBC grounds maintenance and waste collection services in-house on contract expiry and merging with the current GBC service;
- Implementing a shared procurement function and jointly procure and contract for major areas of third party spend such as energy, system software;
- Centralising shared services;
- Combining revenues and benefits; and
- Consolidating the administrative estate.

We have set out, in Appendix 7, a summary level SWOT assessment for each of these opportunities, based on our experience elsewhere and the discussions held with JLT. There are, inevitably, risks with each of these opportunities that would need to be managed and upfront 'invest to save' resource that would need to be found to support implementation. In our view, all could be delivered within the three-year timeframe that JLT believe the Transformation and Collaboration programme should be operating within.



Assessing the nature and potential size of further opportunities for cost saving or outcome improvement

Conclusion

It is apparent that having taken the decision to establish a JLT, GBC and WBC are now at a crossroads and need to decide whether to build on the platform created or move back to their previous states. It would be unprecedented to stay in the current position of having a JLT but no meaningful sharing of services as a result.

The council partnerships that have gone on to share services have saved significant sums of money, albeit when both the capacity to support such programmes of change and the levels of savings achievable were more significant.

Nevertheless, it is evident that the appetite and conviction exists in the JLT to progress the type of opportunities highlighted in this report and to do so within a 3 year period.

On the basis that each of these opportunities will be supported by business case work with only those progressed where it can be confidently demonstrated that they are likely to generate more benefit than cost, then this should only serve to enhance the existing net benefit delivered by the collaboration to date.

APPENDICES

Appendix 1 – About Local Partnerships

Local Partnerships is a joint venture between the Local Government Association, HM Treasury and the Welsh Government. We provide an interface between central government policy and local delivery.

Our principal responsibility is to deliver expert support to the public sector, helping make best use of limited resources as demand for services continues to rise. We work with councils and combined authorities to help transform services across multiple disciplines including:

- development of commercial capability and strategies
- regeneration and tackling the housing crisis
- waste collection and disposal
- infrastructure
- renegotiation of public sector contracts
- energy
- digital transformation
- keeping projects and programmes on track
- mergers and shared services
- production of business cases
- integration of health and social care
- alternative local government models and financial restructuring
- formal collaboration and merger

Our 2023-24 impact report reflects the activities of Local Partnerships and the successes we have helped our clients achieve. It is available on our website: <https://localpartnerships.gov.uk/reports/impact-report-2023-2024/>

We bring public and private sector experience that provides confidence, additional capacity and commercial capability. Our team of experts works solely for the benefit of the public sector, helping councils and combined authorities overcome challenges to achieve and maintain financial resilience.

Appendix 2 – Cost benefit assessment of the joint management team

			1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
		Period ending	31-Mar-22	30-Jun-22	30-Sep-22	30-Dec-22	30-Mar-23	30-Jun-23	30-Sep-23	30-Dec-23	30-Mar-24	30-Jun-24	30-Sep-24	30-Dec-24	30-Mar-25
		Year	1	2	2	2	2	3	3	3	3	4	4	4	4
	Indexation pa		0.00%	3.72%	3.72%	3.72%	3.72%	4.00%	4.00%	4.00%	4.00%	5.33%	5.33%	5.33%	5.33%
	Index		1	1.009173	1.0184302	1.0277722	1.0372	1.04742	1.0577406	1.068163	1.078688	1.0927758	1.1070475	1.1215057	1.1361527
As-Is															
	Staffing costs		688,805	695,123	712,117	548,453	553,484	558,938	564,445	570,007	579,546	602,065	613,475	480,908	0
Counterfactual															
	Staffing costs		726,469	733,133	739,858	746,644	753,493	760,918	768,415	775,987	783,633	793,867	804,235	543,159	0
Difference															
			-37,664	-38,009	-27,741	-198,191	-200,009	-201,980	-203,970	-205,980	-204,088	-191,803	-190,760	-62,251	0
Re-structuring costs															
			516,465	0	136,022	506,563	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total															
	Total benefit	1,762,447	37,664	38,009	27,741	198,191	200,009	201,980	203,970	205,980	204,088	191,803	190,760	62,251	0
	Total cost	1,159,050	516,465	0	136,022	506,563	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Net	603,397	-478,801	38,009	-108,281	-308,372	200,009	201,980	203,970	205,980	204,088	191,803	190,760	62,251	0

Appendix 3 – evidence of sector wide recruitment and retention difficulties



Local Government Workforce Survey 2022

Research Report
May 2022

All heads of human resources (or equivalent position) in England were asked to complete an online survey between March and May 2022. The final overall response rate achieved was 36 per cent (119 councils). By council type, the response rate was highest from counties (50 per cent / 12 councils) and lowest from London boroughs (27 per cent / nine councils).

- Nearly all respondents (94 per cent) said that they were experiencing recruitment and retention difficulties.

More than half (58 per cent) of all county, district and single tier respondents said they were experiencing difficulties recruiting planning officers. Over half (53 per cent) also said recruiting legal professionals was difficult. See Table 9.

Table 9: Please indicate for which of the following occupations, if any, your authority is experiencing recruitment difficulties – counties, districts and single tier roles

	Counties	Districts	Single tiers	All councils
	%	%	%	%
Planning officers	83	63	47	58
Legal professionals	67	50	53	53
ICT professionals	83	31	45	43
Chartered surveyors	50	35	40	39
Engineering professionals	58	6	42	27
HR and industrial relations officers	33	19	32	26
Finance officers (other than s151)	50	22	21	24
Heavy goods vehicle drivers	17	28	17	22
Administrative officers/assistants	67	4	17	16
ICT user support officers	25	19	11	16
Economic development officers	33	11	13	14
Civil enforcement officers	17	15	11	13
Cleaners, domestics	42	2	11	10
Call centre agents/operators	25	4	8	8
Personal assistants and other secretaries	25	4	4	6
Gardeners and grounds people	8	6	6	6
Community drivers	33	0	4	5
Other front line staff	8	4	2	3
Section 151 officer	0	2	4	3
Playworkers	0	0	0	0
Other (please specify below)	17	13	17	15

Base: all respondents (119 – counties (12), districts (54), single tier (53))

Table 12: Please indicate for which of the following occupations, if any, your authority is experiencing retention difficulties – counties, districts and single tier roles

	Counties	Districts	Single tiers	All councils
	%	%	%	%
Planning officers	33	48	25	36
ICT professionals	75	20	26	29
Legal professionals	50	31	21	29
Chartered surveyors	17	15	17	16
Other (please specify below)	17	13	17	15
Engineering professionals	17	2	25	13
Heavy goods vehicle drivers	17	15	11	13
Finance officers (other than s151)	25	11	11	13
ICT user support officers	25	13	9	13
Civil enforcement officers	8	9	11	10
Administrative officers/assistants	50	2	8	9
Economic development officers	17	9	6	8
Call centre agents/operators	25	4	8	8
HR and industrial relations officers	17	4	9	8
Cleaners, domestics	33	0	8	7
Section 151 officer	0	2	4	3
Personal assistants and other secretaries	17	0	2	3
Community drivers	17	0	2	3
Gardeners and grounds people	0	0	4	2
Other front line staff	0	4	0	2
Playworkers	0	0	0	0

Base: all respondents (119 – counties (12), districts (54), single tier (53))

Appendix 4 – ‘Nearest Neighbour’ authorities

Gross cost of services						
	Year ending £m	31-Mar-21	31-Mar-22	31-Mar-23	31-Mar-24	% change
Guildford		116	115	112	124	6.7%
Waverley		58	60	58	58	0.8%
Combined		174	176	170	182	4.7%
Near neighbour authorities						
Guildford						
Basingstoke and Deane		83	79	79	83	-0.1%
Chelmsford		108	114	109	132	22.2%
Cherwell		78	84	80	77	-1.9%
Hertsmere		64	60	59	61	-4.1%
South Cambridgeshire		68	66	70	72	7.3%
Winchester		93	100	85	69	-26.1%
Waverley						
East Hampshire		47	52	57	58	23.5%
Sevenoaks		62	59	60	60	-2.8%
South Oxfordshire		63	66	67	67	6.8%
Test Valley		65	62	63	63	-3.1%
Tonbridge and Malling		63	62	58	60	-4.9%

Cost of services excludes HRA, impairment and revenue funded by capital under statute

Employee expenditure						
	Year ending £m	31-Mar-21	31-Mar-22	31-Mar-23	31-Mar-24	% change
Guildford and Waverley combined		61	66	67	65	7.4%
Near neighbour authorities						
Guildford						
Basingstoke and Deane		29	32	36	34	17.0%
Chelmsford		37	43	44	42	11.0%
Cherwell		24	29	31	26	6.6%
Hertsmere		16	18	20	19	19.5%
South Cambridgeshire		31	37	39	34	11.4%
Winchester		23	24	26	24	4.3%
Waverley						
East Hampshire		17	19	21	17	3.0%
Sevenoaks		14	15	17	17	21.7%
South Oxfordshire		19	24	24	15	-24.5%
Test Valley		22	24	25	24	8.3%
Tonbridge and Malling		12	13	13	14	18.2%

The tables above show how the costs of delivering services, in terms of gross costs and employee costs, at Guildford and Waverley have changed over the period since the collaboration commenced and how the costs of similar councils* have changed over the same period. The values are in actual, nominal terms i.e. the impact of inflation has not been removed. The figures have been taken from the councils’ financial statements.

*These are those authorities deemed by CIPFA as similar for benchmarking purposes. They are referred to by CIPFA as ‘nearest neighbour’ authorities and are listed here.

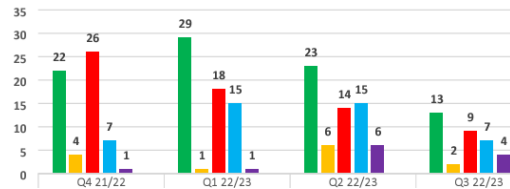
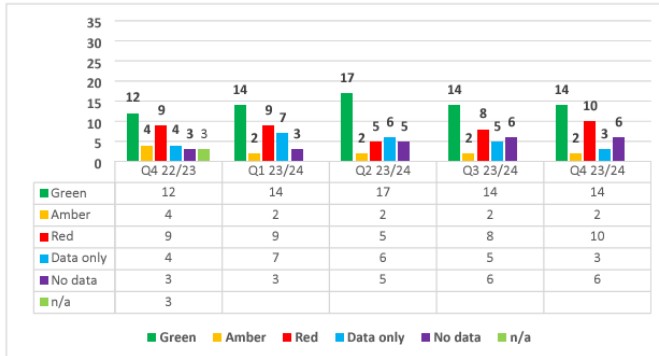
Basingstoke and Deane
Chelmsford
Cherwell
East Hampshire
Hertsmere
Sevenoaks
South Cambridgeshire
South Oxfordshire
Test Valley
Tonbridge and Malling
Winchester

Appendix 5 – List of collaborative initiatives generating non-monetary benefit

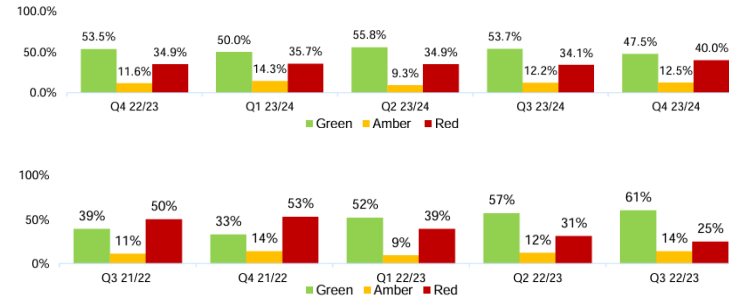
Non-monetary benefits		
Initiative	Type of benefit	Detail
Shared functions	Resilience, outcomes, cost avoidance	Private Sector Housing Management; Disabled Facilities Grant Management; Joint Procurement function; Joint Facilities Management; Joint Business Support Team; and Emergency Planning via a shared resilience contract, Shared temporary Business Manager for Planning, Joint Interim Borough Solicitor, Shared HR change Manager; Secondment of Housing staff between the councils to meet capacity gaps; and sharing of finance staff to assist with key deadlines; and, shared approach to risk and performance management
Shared learning and best practice	Resilience, outcomes, cost avoidance	Emergency Services joint project planning, risk management, staff secondments and sharing of best practice and across electoral services;
Shared service provision	Resilience, efficiency and productivity	Mutual ICT support given during outages; recharging of benefits processing to share capacity and maximise productivity; joint grants administration, e.g., energy support grants
Shared or aligned policies	Efficiency	Community Asset Transfer Policy; Annual Pay Policy Statements; Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Strategies and action plans; Schemes of Delegation; People Strategies ; Corporate Strategies; Performance and Risk Management Strategies; Customer Charters; a new Joint Officer Scheme of Delegation (due to be adopted in July 2024); Electoral Services policies and procedures and, a shared staff values framework.
Joint approach to consultation responses	Productivity	Levelling Up & Regeneration Bill: 2nd March 2023, Infrastructure Levy: 9th June 2023, AONB: 13th June 2023, Farnborough Airport Expansion proposals responses

Appendix 6 – Service performance

Guildford Borough Council corporate KPIs



Waverley Borough Council corporate KPIs



Appendix 7 – SWOT analysis of saving opportunities

Central services

Strengths	Weaknesses
Similar processes	Misaligned staff terms and conditions
Proven successful elsewhere	
Opportunities	Threats
JMT established	Capacity - workforce and invest to save funding
Common software systems	

Third party spend

Strengths	Weaknesses
Procurement pipeline	Mixed operating models
Opportunities	Threats
Energy	Capacity - workforce and invest to save funding
Software	

Revenues and Benefits

Strengths	Weaknesses
Similar processes	Misaligned staff terms and conditions
Proven successful elsewhere	
Opportunities	Threats
JMT established	Wider Surrey collaboration potentially under consideration

Waste Collection

Strengths	Weaknesses
Proven successful elsewhere	Misaligned terms and conditions
	Contrasting delivery models
Opportunities	Threats
JMT established	Access to necessary data for a business case
Expiry of outsourced contract in 2027	Capacity - workforce and invest to save funding

Administrative estate

Strengths	Weaknesses
Assets possess prime alternative development potential	Difficult to consolidate within existing estate
Opportunities	Threats
JMT established	Availability of invest to save funding
Significant scope to rationalise office space	

Grounds maintenance

Strengths	Weaknesses
Proven successful elsewhere	Misaligned terms and conditions
	Contrasting delivery models
Opportunities	Threats
JMT established	Access to necessary data for a business case
Expiry of outsourced contract in 2026	Capacity - workforce and invest to save funding

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