

Press Release



Listening Learning Leading

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Councils Announce Next Phase of Joint Working

South Oxfordshire and Vale of White Horse councils today announced the next phase of their move to joint working, which will see 42 manager posts across the two councils reduced to 29. The reduction will generate a shared saving of nearly £600,000. It comes on top of the £800,000 saving already generated through the creation of a shared management team and heads of service. Together with savings generated through running a joint waste collection operation and joint finance function, the two councils have now saved their taxpayers in the order of £2.5 million through joint working.

The proposals have been finalised after consultation with staff, with all appointments to take place before the end of the financial year. Of the 29 managers, 24 will have a brief to work across both councils from next April, increasing to 25 by year end.

These latest announcements cement South and Vale's position as the fastest moving councils when it comes to joint working. Amongst other initiatives already agreed:

- from April 2010 all staff will work to common terms and conditions of employment regardless of employer
- both councils are now signed up to a locally agreed formula governing pay increases
- the councils have moved to a common email system and have a shared domain name for those staff working across both (@southandvale.gov.uk)

Leader of Vale of White Horse council Tony de Vere says:

"The speed at which we are achieving efficiency savings through joint working sometimes surprises even those of us who are actively involved in leading the whole project. In a tough financial climate I cannot overstate the benefit that these savings are bringing in helping us to protect front line services. The Vale has been able to take over £1 million out of its revenue budget without any loss of service quality. Indeed our performance generally is improving, with many of our key indicators on the up."

Ann Ducker, Leader of South Oxfordshire District Council says:

“What is unfolding in southern Oxfordshire should be of interest to the wider local government community. We are pushing the boundaries and achieving great results as a consequence. In a year when we have done so much on joint working we have also introduced a new waste collection service that is generating fantastic results with over 70 per cent of waste being recycled and Vale residents will get the benefit of that next year. Tony and I may have different political philosophies but we are not letting that get in the way of providing high quality, great value services for residents of both our councils.”

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