

Southwest One Contract Renegotiation Newsletter no.2

The aim of these newsletters is to keep Somerset County Council secondees in Southwest One updated on the progress of the Council's contract renegotiation.

This newsletter is produced by the County Council's Client Services Team, who hold the responsibility of running the Southwest One contract, and are leading on the renegotiation work.

If you have any questions or comments, please contact Client Services via email at: clientservices@somerset.gov.uk

Update on proposed service changes

This newsletter summarises service changes that SCC is proposing as part of the contract renegotiation. Hopefully most staff will have received this information at a team briefing today, but we wanted to make sure that all secondees also received a written update.

We are sharing this information now because we want to keep staff informed about the Council's plans wherever possible, and we are now in a position to undertake consultation with trade unions on behalf of staff who may be affected by any changes.

However, **the proposals are still subject to ongoing negotiations and an acceptable commercial agreement between SCC and Southwest One.**

Background

As a reminder, the aims of SCC's contract renegotiation with Southwest One are to deliver:

- An ongoing, sustainable and material saving on the SCC Southwest One budgets
- A simplification of the contract (to focus more on transactional delivery)
- An improved Southwest One governance structure
- A return to direct SCC control of some Southwest One functions and staff

SCC has identified some elements of service that we propose to return to the Council with a view to taking back management responsibility for them.

If this happens, many of the SCC secondees working in the affected service areas will end their secondment to Southwest One and return to SCC, reverting to their original SCC employment terms.

SCC and Southwest One are continuing contract renegotiations and are yet to reach agreement in a number of areas, so these proposals are **subject to further discussions and the conclusion of an agreed contract change.**

Which services might be affected?

SCC is proposing to transfer the following services back to its own management responsibility:

- The SCC element of the Design and Print service.
- HR and Finance 'advisory', Shared Accounting and Business Development functions within the Finance Service.
- The HR Development service and the Learning and Development function.
- The Dillington Advertising and Somerset Staffing traded functions.
- The Business Analyst function within ICT, as well as the ICT support staff currently engaged in supporting SCC's Somerset Skills and Learning service.

The above list outlines specific services where negotiations are sufficiently mature. **All other services** are subject to further negotiations, and we are not ruling anything out at this stage.

What will happen to staff who may transfer back to SCC?

If agreement is reached and services do transfer back to SCC, most services will (broadly) retain their existing structure on transfer. Any future restructuring in other service areas that may transfer will be undertaken as part of the SCC Change Programme and Service Reviews, which will affect all areas of SCC.

However, for the Design and Print service, we will be consulting with staff on a restructure which would be effective from the transfer date.

Consultation

A formal consultation process was initiated with the trade unions at the Joint Consultative Committee (JCC) meeting on 30th September. Consultation with trade unions will be through the existing recognised mechanisms.

Where secondees from either ASC or TDBC are affected, they will be addressed on an individual basis and we will continue to talk to Southwest One partners to agree how consultations will be conducted, should any of their staff be affected.

Timeline

- 30 Sept 2011 Start of consultation with trade unions
- 31 Dec 2011 Conclude consultation
- TBC* Letter to staff giving notice of transfer
- TBC* Transfer back to SCC

* Timings are unknown until commercial settlement and contract change notice have been agreed between SCC and Southwest One.

What happens next?

Negotiations between SCC and Southwest One still need to be concluded and commercial settlements agreed. In the meantime, regular Resources JCC meetings will continue with trade unions, and we will work with other Southwest One partners on the potential impacts to staff and services.

There will be further briefings at key points in the renegotiation, although we are unable to set any dates for these at this point.

We know that there will be a lot of questions coming from today, some of which we will be able to deal with now, and some that will be dependent on finalising the commercial negotiations. Please raise any questions you may have through your line manager, or email clientservices@somerset.gov.uk and we will answer whatever we can.

Information from today will be posted on the SCC intranet, along with an updated list of FAQs. Visit: <http://enterprise.somerset.gov.uk/somerset/resources/clientservices/sworenegotiation/>