

**RISK ASSESSMENT**  
**Partnering and Partnering with East Devon District Council**

Risk or Circumstance	Probability and Impact Risk Assessment U = Unquantified L = Low M = Medium H = High								Comments/Mitigation
	Probability				Impact				
	U	L	M	H	U	L	M	H	
Risk to SSDC in not having a partnering arrangement	*							*	Lower CSR settlements will mean cuts. Without a partnering arrangement the council will have to absorb all cuts within its own budget.
Risk to SSDC services if not having a partnering arrangement				*				*	Any cuts will fall on services. Likely the council would reduce spend (or even curtail all spend) in discretionary areas first. Sport, art, leisure, grants and the area system could be hit.
Risk to SSDC in having a partner.	*					*			Main risk in a joint management arrangement is whether staff can do the job effectively. 30 councils have these arrangements and they are reported to work well. There is no risk to the council's sovereignty.
Risk to SSDC if having a 'non Somerset' partner.		*				*			Somerset wide initiatives such as SWP (Somerset Waste Partnership), SWAP (South West Audit Partnership) and 'Into Somerset' will continue unaffected. Anything that works best 'Somerset wide' would continue.
Risk to SSDC if a Devon unitary eventually happens		*				*			Any financial risk is addressed via the proposed Protocol. There is the risk that SSDC would find EDDC difficult to replace. However that risk already exists and is not increased by the partnering proposal.
Risk to SSDC if EDDC wish to terminate the arrangement.		*				*			As above

Appendix H

Risk or Circumstance	Probability and Impact Risk Assessment U = Unquantified L = Low M = Medium H = High								Comments/Mitigation
	Probability				Impact				
	U	L	M	H	U	L	M	H	
Risk to SSDC if SSDC wish to terminate the arrangement.		*						*	The Protocol would require SSDC to pay EDDC a financial settlement. This could be costly. SSDC would likely need to operate, for an agreed term without a full time CEO. A director would be required to take on the interim Head of Paid Service role. Reputation damage could follow.
Risk to SSDC of having a joint CEO.		*				*			Joint CEO serves 2 councils. 30 councils have this arrangement and they are reported to be working well.
Risk in delaying.	*							*	East Devon may decide not to proceed if SSDC approach later. The required savings do not materialise at the rate required.
Risk to SSDC if proceeding (as per the report in February 2010).		*				*			Key risks have been accounted for.
Risk to services if proceeding.		*				*			Partnering in this way is designed to preserve services and service levels.
Risk to services if delaying.				*				*	Without partnering, services are at risk. Without a strategy the council is vulnerable to losing key staff.
Risk to SSDC reputation if proceeding with EDDC.		*				*			The general public, who have expressed a view, have expressed praise for this move. No-one has expressed disapproval. Key agencies see this as innovative and worthwhile. Some Somerset councils may criticise SSDC for not going with a Somerset partner.
Risk to SSDC reputation if not proceeding with EDDC.			*					*	See previous risk comment/mitigation. In addition, key partners would ask ‘What is Plan B?’ and ‘Why did SSDC not proceed?’

Appendix H

Risk or Circumstance	Probability and Impact Risk Assessment U = Unquantified L = Low M = Medium H = High								Comments/Mitigation
	Probability				Impact				
	U	L	M	H	U	L	M	H	
Risk to workforce if proceeding.		*				*			The arrangement is designed to protect front line jobs. Shared management positions provide opportunities. However there would be some redundancies although less than there would be without partnering
Risk to workforce if not proceeding				*				*	Savings and efficiencies would have to be met throughout the council. Front line, discretionary services would be affected.
Risk that savings do not materialise in partnering EDDC		*				*			Arrangements are proposed to put members at the heart of decision making on savings. However if savings did not materialise then the council would be no worse off than it is now.
Risk if SSDC and EDDC disagree			*			*			The councils do not have to agree. Managers will deliver to each council's agenda. The joint CEO will work to both councils. This is already happening at some 30 councils.
Risk if councils have different views on the performance of the joint CEO.		*					*		Joint Performance Board will set and monitor performance. SOLACE, as the professional body, can provide mediation services.
Financial risk to SSDC if arrangements terminate.			*			*			Both councils will have the protection of a binding agreement.
Risk to SSDC that a suitable partner is not found (assuming the arrangement with EDDC is not pursued).				*				*	Since December another 14 councils have announced joint arrangements. Good partners appear to 'go' quicker. Somerset/Dorset/Wiltshire do not provide any suitable partners.
Risk of losing good staff if members agree to proceed with EDDC.		*					*		Partnering provides staff with many opportunities in terms of jobs, professional development and transferable skills.

Appendix H

Risk or Circumstance	Probability and Impact Risk Assessment U = Unquantified L = Low M = Medium H = High								Comments/Mitigation
	Probability				Impact				
	U	L	M	H	U	L	M	H	
Risk of losing good staff if members determine not to proceed with EDDC.				*				*	Staff will see the inevitability of cuts. Good staff will seek out more secure positions. Recruitment would be curtailed.
Risk to customer service if proceeding with EDDC		*						*	It is management posts that are being merged not front line delivery
Risk to Member sovereign decision making ability		*						*	Nothing in the proposals affect Member decision making ability
Risk to existing partnerships in proceeding with EDDC		*					*		Nothing in the proposals would adversely affect key partnerships and their ability to deliver
Risk of geographical distances involved with both councils			*				*		East/West communications links are very good with the A30/A303 forming a spine linking the two areas. Front line services are less likely to be affected; affected managers will need to utilise modern communication methods where feasible; members will be less affected as a key principle is that the two councils remain as sovereign bodies.