



NEWS RELEASE

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South Derbyshire partnership shows the way

An innovative partnership which guarantees to further improve public services, deliver extra value for money for residents and create economic opportunities for the region has started today in South Derbyshire.

Aimed at delivering better for less while maintaining investment in services, the partnership between South Derbyshire District Council and Northgate Public Services is a pioneering response to the age of austerity.

The contract, worth £22 million, is guaranteed to make savings to the Council of £2.1 million over seven-years. This includes an innovative risk-reward scheme where the cost of introducing new initiatives to transform council services will only be paid out of cashable savings. Northgate will also invest £1.9 million in upgrading IT systems and services.

Northgate has taken on responsibility for managing the District Council's Corporate Services. This includes Finance, Organisational Development, Revenues, Benefits and Customer Services along with IT and Business Improvement as part of its regional centre of excellence.

Using the Civic Centre, in Swadlincote, Derbyshire, as a base, Northgate's regional centre of excellence provides business transformation services for both public and private organisations throughout the East Midlands and nationally.

Cllr Bob Wheeler, the Leader of South Derbyshire District Council, said: "This partnership is all about ensuring that the Council and its residents emerge even stronger through these challenging economic times. Our innovative approach will provide even better value for money to our communities, continue to improve services and create more jobs.

"South Derbyshire is leading the way. We are showing how the public sector must respond. This pioneering partnership will be used as an example of good practice and forward thinking across the country."

Dave Meaden, Chief Executive, Northgate Public Services said: "We are committed to developing new ways of working to beat the age of austerity. We are delighted that South Derbyshire shares this ethos.

"Our partnership is focused on creating better public services for the people of South Derbyshire now and in the future, while making savings, and providing economic opportunities for the region as a whole through our centre of excellence. We believe it is the right response at the right time."

Responsibility for service delivery will stay with the Council. Elected Members will continue to set priorities and scrutinise the partnership.

Under the deal, 84 Council staff members, who have been kept fully informed throughout the process, have been transferred over to Northgate.

As well as protecting jobs at the Council, Northgate will bring in 100 jobs into the District as part of the contract over the next 18 months.

For further information

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Notes to editors

1. At the heart of England and the National Forest, South Derbyshire is one of, if not the fastest growing districts in the East Midlands. Offering the blend of a growing economy, attractive countryside and numerous places for leisure and tourism, the District can truly provide an excellent place to live and work. With a population of over 91,000, South Derbyshire is home to over two hundred companies, including Toyota's global production centre for the European region and JCB's only diesel engine manufacturing plant.
2. The tendering process for the provision of Corporate Services began in October 2008. Each bidder was told that the key objectives were to ensure medium and long term stability, improve access to a wide range of skills, retain and grow additional jobs in South Derbyshire, protect the interests of both the current and future workforce, deliver cashable savings and invest in continued business improvements.
3. Northgate Public Services is an innovative provider of transformation and improvement services to the public sector. It is committed to high quality public services that place individuals and their communities at their heart. Its knowledge and understanding of people's needs are core to its business, as too is its depth and breadth across public services.
4. Northgate's task is to enhance public value through the intelligent use of people and technology; to understand why and what change is necessary; to provide new thinking leading to improved performance; and to link company rewards with positive outcomes for the communities for whom it works. It supports transformation through sustainable performance partnerships.
5. In the UK, Northgate works with ninety five per cent of local authorities, every police force, and a large number of health organisations, housing associations, utilities and transport companies. Founded in 1969, the company has more than 12,000 employees.